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London and South of England Media Awards

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Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 20, 2015

East edition No 678

POLITICS

Can he stop the red rot?

Jeremy Corbyn needs to woo Kent if he has any hope of becoming PM

CRIME

Judgement day for Kenny Noye

Will road-rage killer be freed by parole board?

HEALTH

Fears over teen cancer vaccine

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Corbyn may struggle but his impact is intense

THERE has been so much written about Jeremy Corbyn over the last week, that it seems remarkable it was only last Saturday he was elected.

But in Kent his appointment has added significance.

Because regardless of your political affiliation, a vibrant, dynamic political environment at all levels of government is reliant on there being strong leaders who go into combat against strong opposition. And, arguably, that strong opposition hasn't really existed recently. What's more, because of disillusionment with Westminster and politics generally, the people of Kent have barely noticed it.

With the decimation of the Liberal Democrats and Labour's miserable showing in May, the pendulum of power here has swung very much to the right - with the Conservatives dominant and Ukip biting at their heels.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

Anything to the left has been very much relegated to the also rans.

And that's not a healthy place for the county to be. Democracy may have dictated we are a true blue county with a penchant for the occasional splash of purple, but with all governments, at all levels, the power of the opposition is vital to challenge and confront.

Jeremy Corbyn, it has to be said, would appear unlikely to be the person who will convince the people of Kent to shuffle over the centre ground and into the left. History

here suggests that's not a winning position.

But he has injected Labour, and politics for that matter, with life and purpose again. And if that means more people with opposing views entering the political arena at grassroots level, that is something we should all take great heart from.

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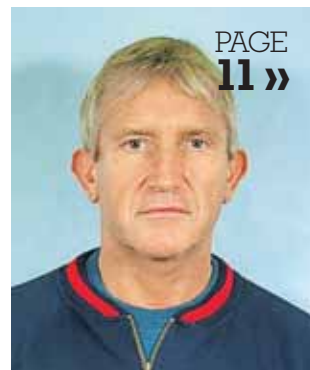
Nutty Boys hail show at Kent County Cricket Club one of the best



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HOW TO CONTACT US...

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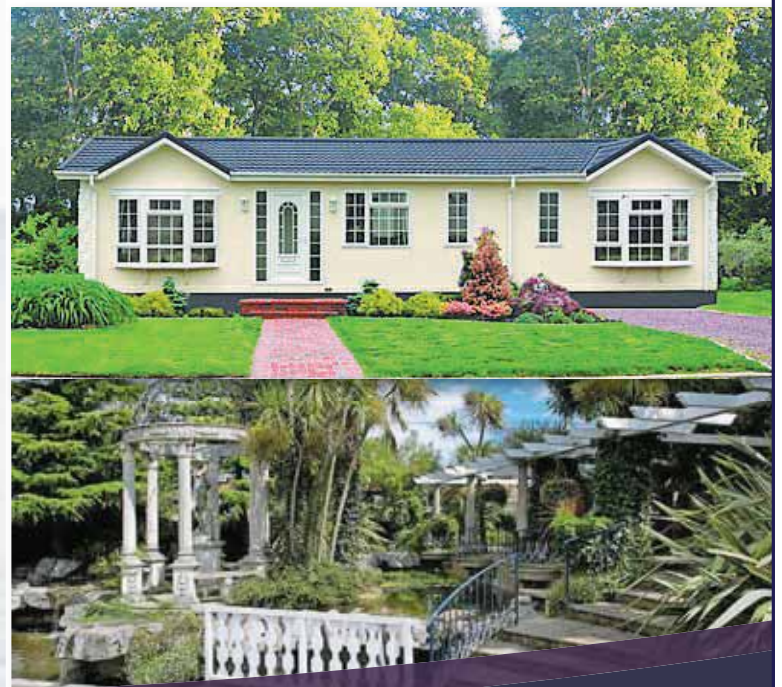
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Hospital has no plans to close doors of A&E again

By Jamie Weir

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HEALTH bosses at the struggling Medway Maritime Hospital said the decision to divert ambulances away from its accident and emergency (A&E) for two mornings this week was the right one to ensure patients got the best care.

Though the Medway NHS Foundation Trust defended the decision, a spokesman told KoS there were no plans to divert ambulances from the hospital again in the future.

The decision was taken to shut the doors of the hospital's A&E department after a Care Quality Commission inspection said the hospital was 'struggling to cope' with the number of patients visiting the department.

Instead, patients requiring emergency treatment between 7am and noon on Wednesday and Thursday, were sent to Maidstone, Darent Valley Hospital and the Kent and Canterbury hospitals.

The Medway trust spokesman told KoS: "It's important to get this into perspective; it was a very minor consequence with very few



PROBLEMS: Medway Maritime was closed to ambulances after a Care Quality Commission inspection

ambulances actually diverted from the hospital. This was only a temporary measure which was put in place for a very limited period. We don't have any plans to do it again in the future.

"It worked extremely well though as Kent is a total health economy and each of the trusts across the county work together to help each other."

The spokesman said many services had remained open at the

hospital, and the A&E department was now back to business as usual.

Despite that confidence, the diversion of ambulances had drawn concern from MPs in the area, with Rochester and Strood's Kelly Tolhurst raising the issue of the hospital - which has been in special measures since July 2013 - at Prime Minister's Question Time.

Chatham and Aylesford MP, Tracey Crouch said: "It is disappointing that the ongoing issues at

the hospital means that temporary closure of some A&E services have been introduced this week but at least assurances have been made about which alternatives will be used.

"I hope that issues at the hospital are resolved as soon as possible, not just for those needing the hospital but for all the hardworking staff at the hospital who are doing their best to turn the tide under immense public scrutiny."

PCC blasts Home Office plans to alter police force funding formula

POLICE and crime commissioner, Ann Barnes, has taken aim at government plans to change how individual police forces are funded.

The PCC said that the county's police force could lose out under the plans, saying that her office has struggled to respond to the government consultation on a new funding formula due to a 'lack of transparency'.

The government proposed a new formula - used to distribute cash to each force - earlier this year. Mrs Barnes says that she welcomed the move initially, but that it soon became clear that PCCs across the country were being asked to 'bet blind' on how it would affect their forces.

Mrs Barnes said: "At first, like my PCC colleagues, I was pleased when the Home Office announced that a new formula was to happen - everyone in the policing world has been calling for years for a new, fairer method of dividing up central government funding. But, sadly, a lack of transparency and meaningful

examples in the consultation process meant that my staff and I can only make a guess as to how the proposed formula could affect us."

The police in Kent have already seen significant cuts to their annual budget, with £50 million taken out of their budget since 2010. The force is expecting to see its government grant cut by between 25 and 40 per cent until 2020, meaning another £70m to £80m of savings may be required. Any changes a new formula brings would be on top of these cuts.

The commissioner added: "Kent Police has already lost a fifth of its workforce since 2010 - that's 1,200 officers and staff who have walked through the door and not been replaced. We already know there will be further deep cuts and a new funding formula could mean even less money coming in. There will inevitably be winners and losers in this exercise and I sincerely hope that Kent is not one of the losers, but that is impossible to predict."

We must support teachers, demands education expert

A LEADING education consultant insists society's perception of teachers has got to change to help halt the mass exodus of talent from the profession.

Former head teacher Peter Read, from Gravesend, made the call in an extensive article written for KoS which appears in our special education supplement inside this weekend's paper.

He said: "At least nurses and doctors faced with similar issues can comfort themselves with the public respect for their professions. Sadly, this country appears to have an astonishingly low opinion of its teachers and the teaching profession. Can we seriously be surprised if so many choose to look for a better life elsewhere?"

Defeated MP Mark Reckless hopes for Welsh redemption

FORMER Kent MP Mark Reckless is seeking to stand for Ukip on the National Assembly of Wales, it has been confirmed.

Mr Reckless, who sensationally defected from the Conservatives to Ukip last year - forcing a by-election in his Rochester & Strood constituency, which he won in November - was booted out of Westminster in May at the general

election after being beaten by Tory rival Kelly Tolhurst.

Now he is hoping to be selected as a candidate for Ukip in Wales.

Ukip leader Nigel Farage, who lives in Westerham, told KoS: "I think Mark is a principled and very decent man and I wish him the best of luck."

Mr Reckless will find out in October if he has been selected.



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Freshers' week warning as students head here

POLICE are urging students to take it easy during freshers' week.

Canterbury alone says it is expecting around 10,000 first year students - part of a total student community of some 32,000 in the city attending the likes of the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church.

PC Sue Ginever, of Canterbury Community Safety

Unit, said: "Our message for students is, know your limits. Look out for one another. Don't leave your mobile phones and bags unattended and avoid walking alone late at night."

Officers will be working with street pastors and the Canterbury street marshal scheme, a new initiative being funded by the two universities.



HIT: Finn Jones in hit TV show

Star of Games of Thrones to make bar visit

GAME OF Thrones star Finn Jones will be making a special guest appearance as a new late night bar in Canterbury rolls out a host of famous faces to herald its opening.

Mr Jones, 27, who plays Ser Loras Tyrell in the hugely popular Sky One drama, will be at Steinbeck & Show in Canterbury this Tuesday.

No stranger to Kent, he attended school in Bromley before finding fame.

He will be followed three days later by Lauren Pope, one of the stars of popular reality TV show The Only Way is Essex (TOWIE).

Other stars planned for the coming weeks include Danny Mac and Ashley Taylor Dawson from Hollyoaks and TOWIE's Jake Hall.

The venue is opening next to the city's cinema.

It opened on Friday night with a special DJ set by Marvin Humes, the former JLS star.

General manager Ian Holmes said: "We've put a strong programme of entertainment together to show our intention from the start to make Steinbeck & Shaw the go-to place for a great night out and memorable experiences.

"Our opening night gave us the chance to show off our new look."

Thief caught on CCTV pinching £300,000 16th-century viola left on train

By Chris Britcher

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A CROOK who stole a £300,000 16th-century viola after a musician left it on a train, has been given a nine-month suspended sentence and told to pay court costs of £3,500.

Stephen Tillyer, 49, appeared at Canterbury Crown Court on Wednesday to be sentenced for two counts of theft following the incident on January 26.

He had been found guilty of both offences following a trial.

The court heard how two passengers travelling separately on the London Cannon Street to Dover train both left their luggage behind on the train when they alighted at Marden station.

The first victim, a musician, quickly realised he had left his viola on the train and immediately called police for their assistance. The viola case contained his 16th-century viola, valued at £300,000 and two 19th century bows, each valued at £35,000.



CAUGHT: Tillyer caught on CCTV

When the train was searched at Dover station the instrument was missing and officers viewed on-board CCTV as part of their investigation.

Tillyer, of Gloster Close, Folke-

stone, was recorded picking up a blue rucksack from a seat. He continued to walk up to the seat where the first victim sat, and took the instrument case down from the luggage rack, moving towards the exit.

Despite opportunities to hand both pieces of luggage into train staff, Tillyer was seen on CCTV walking rapidly away from an approaching member of staff before leaving the train at Folkestone West.

At court, Tillyer was given a six-month sentence, suspended for 12 months, in relation to the theft of the viola, and a three month sentence, suspended for 12 months, for the theft of the rucksack, to run concurrently. He was also ordered to undertake 150 hours of unpaid work and pay £3,500 in court costs.

Detective Constable Bob Gee, who led the investigation for the British Transport Police (BTP), said: "This case should serve as a stark warning to anyone who even considers removing lost property from a train with the intention of keeping it for themselves."

Firm adds to growing portfolio with Bewl

BEWL Water Country Park in Lamberhurst is set to change hands again after a deal was agreed for the running of the popular leisure spot to be taken over by the Markerstudy Group.

The fast-rising firm in Tunbridge Wells already owns a host of key sites in and around the town, among them the Salomons Estate and the One Warwick Park Hotel - formerly the Brew House Hotel.

It will take over the 1,000 acre site from Kent Attractions, a firm in which West Ham co-chairman David Sullivan was a shareholder in. Prior to that, the site had been owned by businessman Simon Hume-Kendall.

The final deal is expected to go through in January. The reservoir itself remains in the ownership of Southern Water.

Louise Clark, managing director of Markerstudy Leisure, said: "We are keen to maximise the potential of the site, and ensure it maintains its position as one of the most idyllic and versatile 'go to' locations."

Call for Rolf Harris books to be binned

A LABOUR councillor is demanding Kent's libraries remove all copies of books written by shamed entertainer Rolf Harris.

Dover district councillor Peter Wallace says Harris - jailed last year for 12 indecent assault against four girls between 1968 and 1986 - still earns money from with each sale or lending.

A report has revealed there are 51 copies of Harris' books still available across Kent libraries.

Harris penned a host of books - primarily on art.

Cllr Wallace, who uses a Dover library, said: "As a parent I don't want his books in the same library where I take my daughter."

"He was imprisoned for paedophilia. It's such a horrible offence that I didn't think KCC would still be lending his books."

Harris, now 85, was sentenced to five years and nine months in prison, last July. He was also stripped of his CBE.

KCC said it would not comment until receiving Cllr Wallace's letter with the request.

Hefty fines for illegal flood plain dumping

TWO waste companies have been fined over £40,000 after being found guilty of illegally tipping rubbish on flood plain land near the River Medway.

The companies - Fastrac Contractors and Utilities Limited and Bennett Grab Services - were caught after the Environment Agency found building waste and rubble being tipped at River House, Station Road, Cuxton. The land was not covered by an environmental permit - something which is required for land being used to dump waste.

Fastrac Contractors and Utilities Limited was found guilty in its absence and fined £40,000 with £1,650 costs at Sevenoaks Magistrates' Court. Bennett Grab Services pleaded guilty and was fined £2,000, with costs of £404.

Alan Cansdale, Environment Agency environment manager, said: "No assessment had been made regarding the impact of deposits in this area of flood plain and the potential to exacerbate flooding elsewhere. The Environment Agency has no hesitation in prosecuting."

DFDS finally gets ferries but French handed £20m demand

By Chris Britcher

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DANISH ferry firm DFDS has finally been handed the two boats once used by MyFerryLink and occupied for weeks by protesting French workers who caused an estimated £2 million of damage.

But the vessels - the Rodin and Berlioz - are unlikely to come into service until the end of November at the earliest as they undergo major repair work - as we reported in KoS last week.

And the workers' co-operative which ran MyFerryLink, SCOP SeaFrance, is being told it owes £20m.

The boats were occupied as part of the protest of former MyFerryLink staff who faced losing their jobs after Eurotunnel - which owned the vessels - was forced to close the service after falling foul of competition chiefs.

A deal was first signed in July for DFDS to lease the boats.

In a statement, Eurotunnel said as a result of damage suffered by the ships whilst they were under the care of the liquidator of the SCOP SeaFrance, "a period of repairs will be necessary".

It added: "With regard to any outstanding debts, the SCOP SeaFrance owes MyFer-



OVER: MyFerryLink closed after falling foul of competition authorities

ryLink €22.7 million (£16.6m), of which €4.8m (£3.5m) are penalties for late hand-over of the ships, with the remainder relating to loss of revenue and repairs to the ships.

"Conversely, MyFerryLink owes the SCOP SeaFrance €3.5m (£2.5m) for the balance of the sale of capacity, of which €600,000 (£438,700) have been paid under the terms of the protocol which brought an end to the conflict and enabled the return of the ships by the liquidator.

"MyFerryLink would like to restate that it was obliged to abandon its maritime operations by the British competition authorities at the end of the period covered by the operating contracts with the SCOP SeaFrance, on July 1 2015.

"In order to begin freight operations with the Nord Pas de Calais, MyFerryLink must first obtain the lifting of the present restrictions from the British and French competition authorities on operating in coordination with the fixed link."

A21 road closure this weekend postponed

MAJOR improvement work due to take place on the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury, due to take place today (Sunday) has been postponed to a later date.

The carriageway had been due to be shut in both directions between Quarry Hill and the Longfield roundabout overnight.

Transport chiefs say the work will now take place later in the year.

Witness appeal after B245 death smash

AN investigation is under way after a 55-year-old man from Tonbridge was killed in a smash on Wednesday morning.

The victim was driving a black Ford Focus on the B245 London Road at Hildenborough when he smashed into a blue Jeep Cherokee. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Smuggled drug find

A 38-year-old Maidstone woman who tried to smuggle drugs into police custody by hiding them in a newspaper has been jailed for 21 months.

Victoria Hicks, formerly of Sunningdale Court, tried to smuggle fentanyl, a class A drug, but her plan was overheard by a police sergeant and the drugs seized. She was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court.



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Don't panic! Hospital to host a full-scale emergency drill

A MAJOR medical emergency will take place at a Kent hospital later this month - but it will all be a drill in order to help rescue teams know how to react.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) and the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust will be joining forces to put their emergency procedures to the test in a practical exercise at the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital (QEOM) in Margate on Tuesday, September 22.

The exercise will involve four fire engines and up to 20 firefighters, who will provide assistance to medical staff to evacuate 'patients', played by actors, from the building as part of a fire simulation.

Margate crew manager Nikki Escudier said: "KFRS and NHS staff



would like to reassure the public that there is no cause for concern and to be aware that although there will be a lot of activity around the St Peters Road entrance on the day of the exercise, there will be no

disruption to treatment or services."

Hospital chiefs say the drill provides "a great opportunity" to ensure plans and procedures are "fully operational".

Honours for three men who saved driver's life

THREE men who rushed to save a woman's life after an horrific car crash have been honoured for their bravery by Kent Police's chief constable Alan Pughlsley.

The three rescued the woman after she was seriously injured in a car crash involving two vehicles on the A2070 Hamstreet by-pass in August 2014.

John Stevens, his son Bob, and Christopher Shore received the chief constable's commendation at an award ceremony held on Tuesday.

Believing the vehicle to be on fire John and Bob Stevens rushed to the aid of one of the motorists. They successfully removed the male driver.

Mr Shore then went to the aid of the female driver of the other vehicle.

All three continued to try to get into the damaged car despite the fact it had caught fire.

They continued in their efforts to rescue the woman, obtaining bottles of water from other motorists and trying to extinguish the flames.

After receiving his award, Mr Stevens said: "We didn't have time to think, we just wanted to help."

Chief Constable Alan Pughlsley said: "The evening was very humbling for me as Chief Constable and someone with 32-years of police service myself. A commendation is the highest award I can give, and they all rightly deserved it for their selfless actions. There is no better thing a person can do than save a life."

Young writer's top story

AN 11-year-old from Tunbridge Wells has been named a runner up in the National Young Writers' Award.

Louise Ansell, who attends Hadlow Primary School, beat competition from across the region with her story Gone? It is judged by best-selling author Jonathan Meres.

Doc evades The Hunted

CANTERBURY GP Ricky Allen continues to evade capture in Channel 4's popular show The Hunted - which see contestants attempt to evade professional trackers and the latest technology to survive in the UK for 28 days.

Dr Allen has been seen keeping one step ahead by hiding in Scotland.

Beggar gets jail term

A PERSISTENT beggar in Chatham who ignored orders placed on him has been sentenced to 120 days imprisonment.

Magistrates heard how Sukhvinder Singh Deo, 45, was arrested in September for breaching an anti-social behaviour order stopping him begging in the High Street.

Fort roars back into life

NAPOLEONIC Fort Amherst will welcome up to 300 re-enactors this weekend as part of the on-going 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.

The Skirmish and Garrison events runs across Saturday and Sunday. Entry is just £2 and tickets are available of the gate.

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Top Three Stories



1. Theft of £300k viola

Video of crook pinching it from train

2. Stack's, £468m plans

But who will pay for a costly solution?

3. Lorry smash shuts M20

Major delays as road shut both ways

The Essential Guide:



...to Operation Stack

Everything you ever needed to know



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: The cast of this year's production of Cinderella at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells took part in a summer photo-shoot to promote the festive extravaganza - among them stars Louise Jameson and Dani Harmer, pictured.

Missed last week's...?

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Top Three Blogs



1. Time for six-hour day?

A little less time, a little more productivity

2. Don't Tell The Bride

Television's guilty pleasure

3. Facebook hits a peak

But is it all downhill from here?

Online poll results

Is Jeremy Corbyn capable of leading Labour to electoral success in Kent?

- 1 Yes - 37 %
- 2 No - 60 %
- 3 Undecided - 3 %

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600	1200	1439	£110.60	£79.00
600	1600	1899	£172.20	£123.00
600	1800	2184	£184.87	£133.00



Width mm	Height mm	BTU	List Price	TKM Price
400	800	725	£89.60	£64.00
400	1000	864	£99.40	£71.00
400	1200	1052	£107.80	£77.00
400	1600	1390	£162.00	£116.00
500	800	859	£93.80	£67.00
500	1000	1015	£101.47	£73.00
500	1200	1240	£110.60	£79.00
500	1600	1638	£169.40	£121.00
500	1800	1882	£183.40	£131.00
600	800	995	£92.40	£66.00
600	1000	1174	£105.00	£75.00
600	1200	1439	£166.20	£83.00
600	1600	1899	£177.80	£127.00
600	1800	2184	£191.80	£137.00

* Electric element option available for all above rails for dual energy installations

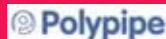
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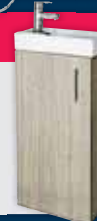
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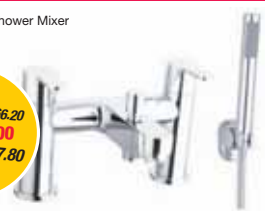
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Noye should stay in jail, says cop who caught him

The notorious criminal is expected to learn the outcome of his parole board hearing this week and could be released

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE top former detective who put notorious road-rage killer Kenneth Noye behind bars says the crook should be locked up for good.

It comes as the 68-year-old will learn this week if he is to be released when he appears in front of a parole board hearing to hear the result of their deliberations.

Noye is currently serving a life term with a minimum 16-years before being eligible to apply for parole, after the 1996 stabbing of Stephen Cameron.

Known as the M25 road-rage murder, Noye stabbed the 21-year-old in front of his girlfriend on the slip road of the motorway at Swanley.

He then fled abroad to Spain, sparking a huge man-hunt, before finally being caught and facing trial in 2000. It was not the first time he had been jailed or involved in a high-profile crime.

He had been jailed for his role in the

daring Brink's Mat gold bullion robbery of 1983 which saw a then record haul of some £26m of bullion, diamonds and cash from a warehouse in Heathrow. Noye was jailed for handling the stolen gold but after admitting killing a policeman he found in the grounds of his Kent home he was cleared. (see box).

But he could be released later this year, if the parole board decide he is no longer a threat to society.

The hearing took place two weeks ago and a verdict is expected by this Tuesday, September 22.

Stephen Cameron's family have spoken out over his possible release. His mother said earlier this year: "We just feel it's not fair he should come out."

"He's a villain and he always has been. His whole is criminality."

And that view is echoed by former detective superintendent Nick Biddiss who was in charge of the case and who finally tracked Noye down to a hideaway in Spain.

The former police chief told KoS: "My own personal view is that some people should never come out and he



PAROLE: Noye, pictured when arrested for the killing of Stephen Cameron in 1996, is now 68 years old

is perhaps one of them.

"But that's how I feel, and I feel the Cameron family will go through the whole trauma again, and that is a problem.

"That is a problem with all victims, not just the Cameron family, but all victims of these sorts of crimes.

"And bear in mind this all happened in 1996 - which is less than 20 years ago. It seems like it was just

yesterday, and I do feel sorry for the Cameron family."

But he admitted the legal system could rarely be double-guessed.

"I don't necessarily agree with it," he said, "but we have to deal with the system and we have to accept the way things pan out in the end. The course of justice must continue."

The findings of the parole board are expected by Tuesday. And it has sev-

eral options open to it.

After listening to cases made by people like prison staff, medical and legal experts and the applicant himself, it can decide if a prisoner can go free on licence; be moved to a lower security prison; or keep the status quo.

Whatever the judgement on Kenneth Noye, you can be certain the judgement will make significant headlines.



VICTIM: Stephen Cameron was just 21 when he was stabbed to death

A LIFE OF CRIME: HOW NOYE'S REPUTATION GREW

BEXLEYHEATH born Kenneth Noye's distinctive bent nose was perhaps a sign of things to come; legend has it he received it after falling from a neighbour's tree. He had been pinching their apples. He was only three at the time.

Media reports say his mother caught him pinching cash from a Woolworth till at five, and he was known as a bully at Bexleyheath Secondary Modern School.

Still at school, there was the selling of stolen bicycles and later acting as a fence for other property, for which he got a year in borstal.

It was here that he met legal secretary Brenda Tremain, who he later married.

Snapping up a 20-acre site in

School Lane, West Kingsdown, he would go on to build a £1m mansion.

He ran a haulage company and was a bullion dealer. In 1983, thieves took £26m in 6,800 gold bars from Brink's Mat.

Three years later he was in the frame for handling some of it, and undercover policeman John Fordham was in the grounds of Noye's home on surveillance.

When Noye spotted him hiding in the grounds of his home, Noye stabbed him to death. He was cleared of murder when he claimed the 11 wounds were in self-defence.

During that investigation, 11 gold bars were found and Noye was jailed for 14 years on a handling charge and released in 1994.

In 1996, Danielle Cable, now in a witness protection programme, apparently cut up Noye on an M25 sliproad near Swanley. At the red lights on the roundabout, Noye confronted her and boyfriend Stephen Cameron. In the scuffle Mr Cameron was stabbed twice in the chest. He died in Ms Cable's arms.

Noye went on the run to Spain and was later extradited and was convicted in 2000.

At Noye's trial, no tariff was set, but in 2002, David Blunkett, the home secretary at the time, placed it at 16 years.

It's thought Noye is currently held at Wayland prison in Norfolk. Several appeals against conviction and sentence length all failed.



CHAOS: Operation Stack has been in place 32 times this year, costing the county's tourism industry money as well as causing problems for other businesses in Kent and across the UK

Hauliers call for 'no strike' zone to fight pain of Operation Stack

The demand came as county transport chiefs discussed a range of proposals for long term solutions

THE only truly long term solution to the chaos caused by Operation Stack according to the Freight Transport Association's (FTA) head of policy, Natalie Chapman, is clamping down on French strike action.

Ms Chapman said that, although migrants had received much of the media attention, it was industrial action by former MyFerryLink workers which had sparked the serious problems for cross-Channel travel.

She was speaking after a report on possible measures to combat Operation Stack – when HGVs are parked, or 'stacked' on the M20 during periods of cross-Channel travel disruption – was discussed by transport chiefs from Kent County Council (KCC).

Ms Chapman, who worked on the report as part of a task force which included the police, KCC, Highways England and other interested parties, told KoS that she was hoping for a solution to the problem of strikers in Calais holding the route to ransom.

She said: "We need to ensure that the root cause of Operation Stack being implemented is actually tackled. That cause earlier this year, and so often before that, was industrial action in Calais.

"We're calling for a no-strike zone in the Calais area to make sure that this critical area of infrastructure, with the port, remains open for transport. We need to tackle this issue of industrial relations, as that's one of the big reasons for this vital trade route being brought to a grinding halt."

That's something Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins backs, tell-

ing KoS: "I met with the president of the port of Calais last week to discuss the subject of strikes. I think if the French adopted the same sort of union law we have in the UK, that would be a much stronger solution than any ban on strikes."

Solutions to striking French workers aren't likely to come in the short term though, and there are other problems such as migrants attempting to cross the Channel and technical issues in the Channel Tunnel.

The range of proposals covered in the report would offer respite for the county's motorists from the pressure of Operation Stack. The issue is the lack of cash to pay for them, with the report saying to implement the recommendations would cost an eye-watering £468 million.

Cabinet member for environment and transport, Matthew Balfour said he wanted to ensure the county's taxpayers didn't end up footing the bill.

Cllr Balfour said: "We have no money, nobody has sent us a cheque yet. The figure mentioned in the report is a likely cost of funding the solutions. We are asking for money and we are asking for guarantees. Of course we're looking for long term solutions, we are not looking for a short fix.

"The government has asked us, and more particularly Highways England to look at solutions which can be put in, as the prime minister put it, at a pace."

That issue of funding is something Ms Chapman feels strongly about, telling KoS that the public in Kent shouldn't have to bear the cost of a national problem.

She said: "This is not Kent's problem, but an issue which affects people



PLANS: Cllr Balfour wants funding

across the country. During the period when Operation Stack was called over the summer, I was contacted by the Scottish government because of their concerns about the effect it was having on their fresh produce industry, with stock being ruined as it made its way towards the Channel. It affects everyone, both across the UK, and in Europe, if this key trade route is disrupted.

"Added to which, many of the lorries which travel across the Channel from Kent are foreign registered, so it's impacting on them in a significant way as well."

Mike Eddy, a Dover councillor from Kent's Labour group, said that he agreed it was more than just a county problem.

He said that: "One of the things I'm pleased to see is that it is on the national agenda. The problem is the national agenda is looking at it as spe-

cifically a Kent problem. It is not just a Kent problem. It is a problem with the whole economy and how we deliver goods from the manufacturer to the market."

The FTA calculated that Operation Stack cost the haulage industry around £750,000 each day - the 32 days which it has been implemented in 2015, therefore, cost a whopping £24 million to that sector.

It wasn't however the only cost, with the Port of Dover saying the UK economy lost out on around £250 million of business, and the county's tourism industry taking a hit as four out of five local tourist businesses reporting dips in their trade during their busiest time of year.

The raft of solutions offered up in the report included work to strengthen the hard shoulder M20 coast-bound between junctions eight for Bearsted and 10 at Ashford and changes to the central reservation between junctions 10 and 11a for the Channel Tunnel to improve the resilience of the link were part of the proposals.

Also on the shopping list were improvements to the A20 in and around Dover to increase capacity and remove bottlenecks. These improvements though, didn't tackle the issue of where to park the main chunk of HGVs stuck in Kent when Operation Stack is implemented.

One proposal outlined in the report was the expansion of the STOP24 lorry park site at the Westenhanger junction of the M20, which would extend parking for up to 1,000 HGVs. More controversially though was another proposal for a large new lorry park located close to the M20 which would be capable of taking up to

4,000 HGVs in times of travel trouble.

Mr Collins said that in his view, the proposal to expand the STOP24 lorry park was the best short term solution on the table.

He told KoS: "I'd like to see that go forward swiftly, as it already has the backing from its owner, who wants to expand the site, and it can provide valuable, quick lorry parking which could be partly privately financed.

"We do need new off road lorry parking facilities, but it's important to get the site right and that's something which KCC hasn't been good at doing before. The site near Westenhanger would prove poor in my view, as its on the wrong side of the road, and not in the best place for HGVs to get to. I think that we also need to think about a lorry park in the M2 corridor, as there's also a tremendous amount of freight traffic travelling down there."

Cllr Balfour said that he didn't want to disclose sites KCC had looked at because it set the 'hares running'.

While those on the cross party KCC committee which discussed the report were broadly supportive of it, many were critical of the use of the former Manston Airport site in Thanet for lorry parking.

Ukip councillor, Mike Baldock took aim at it proposing that the committee say it was not in favour of the use of the former airport as a site for lorry parking.

He said: "We don't solve this problem by coming up with a 'we must be seen to be doing something' type of solution, which is what Manston's use as a lorry park is. We won't solve the problem of Operation Stack with solutions like that."



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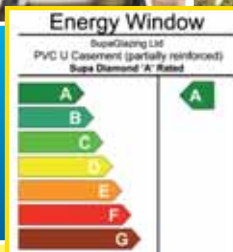
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JAB: Injection is said to protect against around 70 per cent of cervical cancer strains

Cancer vaccine blamed for loss of teens' health

Government data has shown more than 8,000 teenage girls have reported adverse reactions to the HPV vaccine to prevent cervical cancer.

Emma Youle asks whether parents should be worried as she speaks to two Kent sufferers...

THIS month thousands of young teenage girls in Kent will have the HPV vaccine at school as the latest round of the programme is rolled out.

The jab has been described as "probably the most important thing ever done" to protect women's health and is predicated to prevent up to 400 deaths a year from cervical cancer.

Yet some parents are questioning the vaccine's safety as their daughters have suffered disabling and life changing illnesses following vaccination.

One of those is Christina Berry-McIntosh, from Birchington, whose daughter Ellen was a happy and healthy 12-year-old girl who loved to swim competitively and take part in charity races before suffering such debilitating ill health she has been left in a wheelchair.

"Every day I regret ever having allowed her to have the HPV vaccine and can't help but wonder how different our lives could have been," said her mother.

The vaccine is given as two, and previously three, separate injections to girls aged 12 or 13 at school.

Ellen had the first and second jabs at Charles Dickens School in Broadstairs in 2010 and fell ill immediately after.

"From that day she suffered virus after virus," said her mother. "We went to several doctors who really were not taking this seriously. Not only did they treat Ellen with a total lack of respect they treated myself and my husband like criminals. We were made to feel that this was all our fault."

By the time Ellen took her GCSEs she was using a cane and she is now unable to walk unaided and has to use a wheelchair.

She vomits almost every day, has great instability in her legs and feet, has muscle spasms, brain fog, urinary urgency, clicky joints and chronic pain in her ribs and joints.

Now aged 18, Ellen has been diagnosed with PoTS syndrome, a condition that causes abnormal increases in heart rate, as well as hyperventilation syndrome and Raynaud's syndrome.

She has been forced to defer her place at university to study fine arts due to her health.

"I cannot put into words how hard the last five years have been for us as a family," said Mrs Berry-McIntosh, 47, an admin manager. "To have to watch our daughter suffer with little or no help from the medical profession."

Other teenagers have similar stories to tell and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) is currently carrying out a review investigating "rare reports" of PoTS and another condition called complex regional pain syndrome following the HPV vaccine after Denmark flagged up safety concerns.

Wedding and party decoration business owner Lisa Stanley is another mother who believes her daughter's health has been affected by the vaccine.

Within hours of having the second HPV jab in January 2013, her daughter Deanna's arms turned purple and she started vomiting.

Just 24 hours later she was in intensive care and Deanna, 16, has had pneumonia twice since, suffers from extreme tiredness and crippling pain in her ribs.

"Two or three months before the vaccine she swam a mile," said Mrs Stanley, 42, in Margate.

"Now she's got chronic fatigue, chronic pain, if she can stand up for the morning she's lucky."

"It's been absolutely horrific and I feel like it's my fault because I signed the consent form."

Government health agencies Public Health England and the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) say PoTS and chronic fatigue occur most com-



RESTRICTED: Ellen Berry-McIntosh has been forced into a wheelchair after having injection

monly in girls around this age whether they are vaccinated or not.

A spokesman for the MHRA said: "The HPV vaccine has a very good safety record, and surveillance shows it has contributed to a significant decrease in rates of infection with the two main cancer-causing human papillomaviruses (HPV)."

Both agencies point to concerns that the vaccine's high uptake rate of 90 per cent will be af-

fected and needlessly place the future health of young women at risk.

Professor Andrew Pollard, chair of the government's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which monitors and advises on vaccine safety, said: "We have very clear evidence that this year 900 women, who have not received the vaccine, will die of cervical cancer and the vaccine has the potential to prevent such deaths in future generations.



FIGHT: Ellen and her mother are convinced vaccine is to blame for her decline in health

HPV VACCINE: THE FACTS AND FIGURES

MORE than eight million doses of the HPV vaccine have been given in the UK since the immunisation programme was introduced in 2008, with close to 90 per cent of eligible teenagers vaccinated.

■ The vaccine protects against two types of the human papilloma virus (HPV) that cause 70 per cent of cases of cervical cancer.

■ It works by providing immunity to these specific types of the HPV virus so woman cannot develop infection if they are exposed to the virus through sexual

contact.

■ It is given in early teenage years so girls are immune before most become sexually active.

■ According to Cancer Research UK cervical cancer is the second most common cancer in women under the age of 35 and 2,900 women a year are diagnosed with the disease, equivalent to eight women every day.

■ Cervical screening is still needed to pick up cervical abnormalities caused by other HPV types that can lead to cancer.

"My biggest concern, given that we're not concerned about safety, is that there is a story here which could deny girls the vaccine and could result in people dying as a result of this."

However, campaigners say the benefits of the HPV vaccine are "over-stated" with little understanding among parents that it does not prevent against all types of cervical cancer but instead provides immunity to two strains of the HPV virus that cause 70 per cent

of cases of cervical cancer.

One of the reasons Ellen's mother was so quick to sign consent forms was that she suffered from cervical cancer when she was younger.

"For me it was a no brainer," said Mrs Berry-McIntosh. "But I hadn't realised the vaccine doesn't actually cover the strain of cancer I had. So now my daughter has had an adverse reac-

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CONVINCED: Deanna Stanley and her mother Lisa from Margate

Continue from page 15

tion plus she could still get cervical cancer." The Association for HPV Vaccine Injured Daughters (AHVID), set up in January this year to raise awareness about concerns over the jab's safety, are gathering data and case studies to submit to the European Medicine Agency's review by mid October.

The group has called for parents to be made aware of the review and for more research to be carried out tracking "symptom clusters" following the HPV vaccine to recognise the many girls

with similar health problems.

Founder member Caron Ryalls, 50, said: "The MHRA obviously maintains the benefits of the vaccine far exceed the risks. We think the benefits are over-stated and the risks underestimated."

■ **If you need support, or would like information about your case sent to the EMA, contact AHVID chair Freda Birrell on jeanfreda8@btinternet.com or 07752 945 545. For more information on the HPV vaccine visit the NHS Choices website.**



WIDESPREAD: Jab is given to young girls

WHAT IS POTS?

THE first reports of Postural Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS) were from 1871 in American Civil War soldiers.

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Medical literature suggests about one in 500 people has the condition, but the government does not collect data on PoTS diagnoses.

The causes are not understood but it affects the autonomic nervous system which controls bodily functions of the bowel, bladder and blood vessels causing them to become subtly abnormal.

Symptoms include chest pains, breathlessness, dizzy spells, black outs, ankle swelling, palpitations and bowel and urinary disorders.

For more information visit potsuk.org

HOW MANY GIRLS SUFFER ADVERSE REACTIONS?

FIGURES from the government body that monitors vaccine safety, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), show there have been 8,228 adverse drug reaction reports made since the HPV vaccine was introduced in 2008 - or one in 1,000 vaccinated girls. Of these 152 relate to girls in Kent.

Of the total reports, 2,587 are classified as "serious" by the nurse or doctor logging it. The MHRA admits the figures are high compared to other vaccination programmes. But the agency says this is explained by:

- The high number of doses given over the last eight years.
- The age of the girls, who are old

enough to voice concerns if they feel unwell.

- The fact that the vaccine is given as two and previously three separate jabs, giving more opportunities to report.

A MHRA spokesman said: "The larger overall number of reports for the HPV vaccine compared to other vaccines gives no cause for concern.

"The overwhelming majority of these reports relate to known side effects that are usually mild, transient and common for most types of vaccine given to adolescents and adults.

"These figures cannot be used to compare the safety of different vaccines."

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Will we see red again as Corbyn era ushered in?

One week in, and Jeremy Corbyn has barely been off the front pages. But will his very different approach to politics help fix Labour's dire election results in Kent? **Luke May** went to find out.



WHEN Tony Blair walked purposefully into 10 Downing Street on that sunny May morning in 1997, the political map of Kent was splattered with the red of New Labour. Remarkably, the party's shift to the centre ground along with disillusionment at 18 years of Conservative rule, saw even a county so traditionally true blue fall under Blair's charismatic spell.

Almost half of the county's MPs sat on Labour benches.

But the capture of the floating voter and defectors from the other main two parties was not to last. By the time the votes were counted at the

end of this May's general election, Kent had not a single Labour MP in the county.

Add to that a gradual disintegration at both town halls - Gravesham slipped through their fingers as did Thanet District Council - and, indeed, County Hall where Ukip became pretenders to the Conservative's crown, and Labour was left battered and bruised.

While the grass roots Labour members could happily spend an evening extolling the faults of Messers Blair and Brown, they could not deny the combination of the two delivered them a power which many consider impossible to re-capture.

But that grim forecast was before Jeremy Corbyn was swept to victory in

HOPE: But will grassroots optimism deliver a reversal of Labour's decline across Kent?

such resounding style last weekend.

Love him or loathe him he has injected a life back into politics not seen since Blair was in his pomp.

People are suddenly taking an interest in politics again; and considering which side of the fence they sit.

The big question now is whether that will, in any way, turn the relentless tide of blue away from the county's shores.

Certainly the reaction among local political opponents has been as extreme as those expressed by the Murdoch press, which has spent the week painting the Islington MP as part danger to the nation, part buffoon.

One Kent Tory MP called Mr Corbyn "a threat to our national security" while a senior Ukip figure expressed fears over "a Marxist influence" the new Labour leader was set to usher in.

Labour stalwarts, on the other hand, are beginning to think the impossible. That Jeremy Corbyn could do what Ed Miliband never did - and reinvigorate the electorate to consider voting Labour once more.

Professor Richard Whitman is head of the school of politics and international studies at the University of Kent in Canterbury.

He believes that despite the surge in interest, Mr Corbyn will struggle to convince Kent to vote for him.

"He has to appeal to those who are willing to switch party," he explains. "But in terms of taking seats in Kent, Labour have a long way to go. You would say Labour support is low and thin across Kent."

"If you look at the seats in Kent Labour has won in the past, they have been with very much a centre ground Labour candidate."

"Whether Corbyn appeals to non-traditional voters rather than convincing others to make that transition from right to centre and centre to right, is hard to say. It's not an easy task."

"But Labour has to appeal in the south east if it wants to be in power. We, as a county, are part of that route back into power."

Gordon Cowan is the leader of the Labour group on Kent County Council. He is only too aware that winning over the south east voter is essential.

"When Labour last won an election, we had eight MPs in Kent. We need to do that again."

"Jeremy certainly has a different style of leadership to what we've seen in a long time. Having said that, he was democratically elected with a large amount of the vote."

"What we have to do now is work hard together to make sure the voice of Labour is heard, but he will have his own style in the way he works."

"The positive thing is that we've had thousands of new members joining the party over the past few months, since the leadership cam-

paign gathered pace. There's a message there in itself."

What's more he expects to extend an invitation to Mr Corbyn to come to Kent soon "and see Labour has to gain the vote here".

The new Labour leader was in Margate just a week before his coronation - holding a packed rally at Margate's Winter Gardens.

Trying to gel the vote in constituencies such as South Thanet - scene of one of the hardest fought seats in the nation in May will be essential. It's not even second any more.

Held by Dr Stephen Ladyman - transport minister in Tony Blair's government it switched to the Conservatives in 2010.

In May, Ukip leader Nigel Farage - who lives in Westerham - stood for an election but lost out to Tory candidate Craig Mackinlay.

Ukip immediately bounced back and took control of its first council as Thanet District Council - traditionally split almost equally between Tory and Labour - went purple.

Will Scobie was the Labour candidate. He said: "I think it's going to be a good thing with him as leader. He came down here throughout the general election and he made Kent one of his last stops on his leadership campaign."

"I think he's willing to talk about some of the biggest issues in Kent such as extortionate rail prices, social housing, immigration and ongoing issues."

Ian Driver, who stood as the Green candidate in the same election, is no stranger to voters switching allegiance. Originally a Labour councillor on Thanet council, he switched to become an independent, before then moving to the Greens.

While he said he had no plans to "jump back" to his party of origin, he admitted Labour was moving back to "the party I used to love".

He added: "I think Corbyn's commitment to the health service and education, as well as challenging benefit cuts will be great for South Thanet as well other places in Kent."

"We've got a significant number of



COMMONS: Labour leader took on David Cameron in a very different PMQs on Wednesday. Pic: PA WIRE

people in South Thanet depending on benefits whilst working extremely hard, and come next April their standard of living will be massively cut."

As with all layers of government in the county, the rise of Ukip has been significant. Its ability to apparently pinch Labour supporters – rather than just dragging Euro-sceptic Tories to their ranks – was hugely damaging.

"I think where Corbyn's hoping he'll be successful," adds Prof Whitman, is in appealing to the disaffected voters. That's what made Ukip successful, both have a 'not business as usual' presence.

"However on key issues such as immigration, Labour will not have the same approach as Ukip, so they will not be able to steal votes from them."

Leader of the opposition on KCC, Ukip leader Roger Latchford, was damning in his criticism of the new Labour leader.

He told KoS: "I'm more concerned with the national aspect, which are his views on the monarchy, national security and rises on taxation. These are issues that effect Kent and country."

Expressing himself "very unhappy" about the appointment of Mr Corbyn he spoke of a possible "Marxist influence".

Prof Whitman agreed Mr Corbyn's personal views – were they to be translated into Labour policy (which remains to be seen), would be very different to what we have come to expect.

He explained: "I would put it in slight different terms."

"If the Labour party was to adopt Jeremy Corbyn's positions on Nato and a British nuclear deterrent it would be a fundamental departure from the foundations on which the UK had organised its security in the last 70 years."

A long-time campaigner against nuclear weapons, Mr Corbyn has previously expressed his desire for the UK not to renew its Trident nuclear weapon programme – a move which even many on his own party, and front bench, have expressed opposition to.

It is likely to be one of a number of issues which will attract or repel possible voters to Mr Corbyn.

The key mission now for the county's Labour supporters is uniting behind their new leader.

Vince Maple is Labour leader on Medway Council.

He explained: "Whichever of the candidates people have supported over the summer we must now work together as a strong opposition."

And challenging David Cameron's stewardship of the county will be key to that.

This week's Prime Minister Questions' took on a very different tone as Mr Corbyn posed questions the public had emailed or Tweeted to him.

The result was a prime minister who barely broke sweat.

But it also suggested Mr Corbyn will be true to his word in terms of delivering a new form of politics.

The question remains, however, if Kent will respond positively to it.

It will be next May – during which Mr Corbyn may still be enjoying a honeymoon period as leader – when we will get our first indication of whether he is convincing us.

The local elections, which will be held alongside the police and crime commissioner poll, will give Labour a good chance to regain ground lost in our town halls.

Any improvement will almost certainly be put down to the new leader. But local elections are notorious for de-



WIN: Jeremy Corbyn won nearly 60 per cent of the vote to be crowned Labour's new leader. Picture: PA WIRE

livering protest votes to Westminster parties and so the real picture of how we intend to vote in a general election may just have to wait a while longer.

■ What do you think of Jeremy Corbyn? Will he help transform Labour's fortunes in Kent? Join the debate and share your views.

Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.



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'Scramble' captures urgency of The Few

By Tim Miles

tim.miles@archant.co.uk

A DYNAMIC picture of aircrew running to their Spitfires has won the Biggin Hill Airport Photographic Competition 2015.

Computer analyst Ian Amis, 47, from south London, won with a photo taken on the commemoration of the Hardest Day of the battle at the airport on August 18.

Mr Amis was among spectators for the event last month, when 22 Spitfires and four Hurricanes flew to mark the turning point in the Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940.

His picture of the pilot scramble by the re-enactor team against a background of Spitfires, in the opinion of the judges, 'best typified the deep-rooted public admiration held for the contribution of Churchill's Few and their ground crews'.

Mr Amis said: "I am very proud to have won this photographic competition. Being taken to the International Air Fair many years ago sparked a life-long interest in aviation that continues to this day"

Airport managing director Will Curtis said: "Ian's picture presents an evocative representation of the sense of urgency that prevailed during each and every day at RAF Biggin Hill during that period 75 years ago."

Two other pictures were highly



WINNER: Ian Amis' picture captures urgency of scrambling pilots

commended by the judges: Firstly, an image by Louise Humphreys, from Hayes, of a Spitfire with the 21st century skyline of high-rise buildings of the City of London in the frame, and secondly a wide-angle shot of Spitfires in the park with silent engines captured by Steve Gurman, from Bromley.

The under 15 category was won by 14-year-old Ned Hayward, from Crockenhill, who submitted a photograph of an RAF Typhoon in flight taken at the airport's Festival of Flight in June.

A total of 120 photographs were



TYPHOON: This photo won Ned Hayward the under 15 category

submitted by 49 photographers with subjects ranging from views of the airport, the RAF Memorial Chapel, the Red Arrows on the ground and in



PRAISED: Louise Humphreys shot of a Spitfire and the City of London and (below) Spitfires ready for action by Steve Gurman



the air, Spitfires, Hurricanes and business jets.

Pictures submitted by the top 10 finalists will be on display for at The

Lookout airport cafe from this week.

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Legend of the Krays and the part Kent played in their lives

As new film charts their lives, we look at the times they spent in the county

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

FOR many they are glorified thugs around whom a legend has developed put about by scared sycophants keen to bask in the fear they generated.

But for others, the Kray twins represent a time when the rules of criminal behaviour were more clearly defined – when those who lived by the sword died by the sword and the public were left untouched.

The truth, of course, lies somewhere inbetween, but the impact of Ronnie and Reggie Kray has long outlived the pair of them and remains deeply ingrained in popular culture.

And now the latest movie, Legend, which sees Tom Hardy portraying both twins, has hit the big screen and thrust the spotlight once again on the duo.

Yet while they reigned the underworld in east London, Kent played a pivotal part in their development and the path they would take.

From time they spent in Canterbury facing a court martial, to the

years Reggie Kray spent behind bars in Maidstone, to the numerous bars and clubs the pair are supposedly invested in over the years, Kray folklore hangs heavy in the county.

In an interview recorded with Kent author Robin McGibbon in 1989, Ronnie Kray admitted he and his brother used to love spending time cycling through the county – being particularly fond of Sandwich.

He said: “We used to go every weekend and used to go cycling along country lanes and go to antique shops and buy antiques.

“We bought clocks, and ornaments – lots of different things.

“There were no crimes. We got on with the locals very well. We used to go to inns. I had gin and tonics and brown ale and Reggie had gin and tonics and light ale. We found it very peaceful. The locals were very nice people, very genuine. We were not looking for any trouble.

“We loved the peacefulness, nice scenery and the quiet. We used to go for long walks along country lanes – it was smashing.”

The twins’ love of the country, which



FILM: Tom Hardy is both Ronnie and Reggie Kray in the film Legend

was brought to an abrupt halt when they were jailed for murder, began when they were hauled away from London to Hertfordshire during the war.

Born in Hoxton, London, in 1933, they grew up in a tough neighbourhood and were devoted to their mother Violet.

They both realised that to survive they had to be tough and both started successful boxing careers.

In 1951, it was their turn for National Service with the Royal Fusiliers as 18-year-olds.

But any hopes of ironing out their troublesome ways fell flat.

Taking on board appalling advice from their deserter father to disobey everything they were told by their superiors, they deserted themselves, assaulted officers and others and ended up spending three months incarcerated at Howe Barracks in Canterbury, while the military prepared court martial hearings so they could



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be dishonourably discharged. Even then, the twins were ruthlessly disobedient, once more thanks to their father's advice to act barmy.

They cut up their uniforms, staged mock tantrums, screamed, threw food at the walls, smashed crockery, and constantly hammered on cell doors.

Ronnie took it further, letting a beard grow and then shaving just half his face. He was diagnosed as psychotic just three years later.

They emptied their toilet buckets over a sergeant, burned bedding and uniforms.

Their time at Howe Barracks came

to an end when a court martial sentenced them to six months at Shepton Mallet in Somerset.

The pair would go on to build up a criminal empire developed through a protection racket where any rival organisation trying to muscle in would be dealt with ruthlessly.

By carefully managing their image as smart-suited, charismatic, 'businessmen' they won power and influence, running a string of clubs which would be frequented by the rich and famous.

When photographer David Bailey took a set of iconic images of them, their legend was secured.

But when Ronnie shot dead George Cornell in the Blind Beggar pub in Whitechapel and Reggie stabbed Jack 'The Hat' McVitie in the basement of a Stoke Newington house, their reign was ended by the justice system.

Both were jailed for life in 1968. Ronnie, certified insane, would be held at Broadmoor Hospital. In 1989 he married Kate Howard, who lived with her grandmother in Swanscombe. He suffered a heart attack and died in 1995. He was 61.

Reggie, who spent much of his time behind bars denied almost all liberties as a category A prisoner, served many years of his sentence in Maid-

COUNTY: Both spent time under arrest in Canterbury's Howe Barracks

stone. During his lengthy sentence he also became a born-again Christian. During his time at Maidstone he married Roberta Jones in 1997.

He was a prolific writer, often sending many letters daily to his twin and others.

He was eventually released in August 2000 from Norwich Hospital on compassionate grounds. Eight weeks later, he died from cancer.

At the funerals for both brothers, huge crowds lined the streets in the

East End to bid them a final farewell.

It is thought the last time the brothers were in each other's company was in 1982 when they were allowed out to attend the funeral of their mother.

Both are laid to rest alongside one another at Chingford Mount Cemetery.

The movie Legend is not the first big screen outing, in 1990, brothers Martin and Gary Kemp starred in The Krays which focused on their rise and fall and the influence of their mother.

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MADNESS: The band hit the crowd at the Spitfire Ground in Canterbury for six with a hit-filled set.
PICTURES BY Sarah Ansell



13,000 watch as Nutty Boys take city by storm

Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

ORGANISERS of a sold-out Madness concert in Canterbury say the event was such a success they are hoping to bring another big name band to the venue next year.

More than 13,000 music fans packed the St Lawrence Ground – home to Kent County Cricket Club – on September 11 for a hits-heavy show from the legendary band best known for hits such as House of Fun, One Step Beyond and Baggy Trousers.

And for lead singer Suggs, who has a house in Whitstable, it proved something of a homecoming show.

A spokesman for the band told KoS: "There were lots of family and friends on the guest list for Suggs, so there was a really great atmosphere both back stage and in the crowd."

"The band absolutely loved it. The crowd really got in the mood, and they said it was something of a highlight of the tour so far."

The group, who last played Kent when they played Quex Park in Birchington five years ago, are continuing on their UK tour which continues until the end of the month.

But the promoters be-

hind the event said everything went so well they hope to stage another big event at the cricket ground next year.

They added: "Everyone at the cricket ground were great and we cannot speak highly enough of them. We've heard no negative comments at all. Hopefully we'll bring another big act next year."

A special repackaged CD and DVD set of Madness' famous Madstock reunion show at London's Finsbury Park from 1992 will be released on October 9. The set was the first show the band had played since splitting in 1986 and sparked an annual series of shows at the venue.

It is released on Salvo Sound & Vision.



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Is booking a parking spot online a road to success?

Tom Pyman reveals how a trend which has been a huge success in London is now taking grip here, giving motorists a chance to book private driveways...

WEB SITES which allow commuters and shoppers to pre-book private parking spots – such as driveways or business spaces – are proving a major hit with frustrated motorists.

Initially a popular option for those travelling to London and keen to park near popular stations or entertainment venues, the trend has spread in Kent with hundreds of spaces now being made available.

And those offering spaces say they are able to offer hugely discounted rates, while freeing up the more popular parking spaces in town centres and close to major transport hubs.

What's more, they claim motorists are increasingly wanting to pre-book to ensure they will not suffer a wasted journey due to overcrowded public

car parks or sky high prices.

Anna Brook is a spokesperson for JustPark. Like similar services, it allows people with parking spaces to advertise on its website, with those seeking a space then able to reserve it and pay in advance.

She told KoS: "We currently have over 1,000 people renting out their parking spaces in Kent – including driveway owners, churches, schools and pubs.

"Particular hotspots in the county include areas around Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks stations, which are incredibly popular with drivers commuting by train into London.

"Many homeowners in these areas use their own cars during the working day and are making a second income by renting out their space while it is left vacant.

"Across the county, property own-



OPTION: Pub close to city walls in Canterbury has already taken more than 50 bookings for parking spaces

ers have made over £80,000 from their underused parking spaces."

The general premise is that online companies act as a shop window – home and business owners can advertise their vacant parking spaces on the website and receive a fee from drivers who want to utilise the space, usually paying a significantly cheaper rate than if they used public car parks for full day parking.

JustPark estimates it offers savings of up to 70 per cent compared with on-street alternatives for spaces booked in advance.

Giles Toman is the owner of The Maiden's Head pub in Canterbury. Sited just a short stroll from Canterbury East railway station, just outside the city walls, it has proved a popular

destination for rail users or those just wanting to be assured a space within walking distance of the city centre.

Mr Toman says he has taken almost 50 bookings in the last year.

He explained: "The simple benefit for me is that it's free money. It's convenient for people to rent out the spaces at the pub rather than on someone's drive, for example. I'm not sure exactly how much I've made but certainly it's in the high hundreds."

However, despite the rising figures, Mr Toman wasn't convinced the scheme would help reduce congestion in the city's notoriously popular main car parks.

"I don't think two or three spaces is going to make a great deal of difference," he said.

To park in his car park for the day would set you back £6.30. Drive a minute further down the road and into the Castle Street multi-storey and the same 12-hour space would set you back £14.40 a day.

The railway station is a more competitive £3.70 a day, but rarely has a space after the London commuters descend around 6am.

In London, the service has proved popular. From reserving spaces on a private driveway within walking distance of Premier League football grounds or near West End theatres, the appeal is obvious – you avoid the expensive car parks and know, for sure, that you will be able to park near your destination.

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ALTERNATIVE: Council car parks can get busy

where, aside from peak Saturdays, most public car parks have spaces available – is a more challenging proposition. But with railway station charges soaring, there is an appeal for many.

Harrison Woods, is managing director of Your Parking Space – another service that specialises in long-term bookings, allowing customers to book on a daily or monthly basis rather than an hourly rate. He told KoS business in Kent is definitely on the up.

“In Kent in particular it is really unprecedented how fast we are growing,” he said.

“People are forced to pay such huge prices in town but we let them search online for the best deal. We get 30 to 40 spaces added every day, and have over 20,000 listed in total.”

Mr Woods said the key to his – and other similar companies – was the ability to reserve spaces in advance.

He explained: “There is a huge demand from drivers to search and book parking online before setting off to their point of interest. At the moment, the majority of councils and commercial parking operators are not putting their product in the shop window so are losing out on bookings.”

“Parking on the drive is great, but people would prefer to park in car parks because they’re more convenient. The majority of the council’s revenue in that department comes from fines, when it should come from providing a good quality service. There are half-empty car parks when they should be full.”

So should local councils be looking into similar strategies and harness technology to allow motorists to pre-book?

Matt Cotton of parking services at Maidstone Borough Council is used to con-

cerns over the scrap for spaces in the always busy county town.

He said: “We don’t have such a facility, there’s no pre-booking system and we don’t intend to have one. A simple first-come-first-served basis is used and it would be detrimental to other motorists if someone booked a parking space and then didn’t turn up.”

“Maidstone council offers short and long stay car parks, on-street parking bays and park and ride, offering a range of parking options to suit the needs of different visitors.”

“We are not currently considering introducing pre-booking of parking spaces in public car parks, however we regularly review parking services to make sure they offer the best options for residents and visitors.”

Fair Fuel UK, the Kent-based national pressure group that campaigns for lower petrol prices and fairer deals for motorists.

Founder Howard Cox, says that while the group backs concepts such as liberating al-

ternative parking options, he doesn’t think councils will feel the impact to its existing revenues.

Mr Cox said: “I don’t think this will impact on councils’ income, there will always be demand for public car parks.”

“My wife regularly uses a public car park in Tunbridge Wells even though she’s got the app for one of these sites, purely because it’s more convenient than parking on someone’s drive a few miles away.”

“We completely support ideas that are practical and backed by common sense, and in principle this is a very good idea.”

“But we need to know that the driver is not being over-charged for parking in these places.”

■ What do you think of this sort of parking initiative? Share your views and join the debate.

Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.



WEBSITE: Just Park is one of those offering pre-book service



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SPIDER: The arachnid was found in a Whitstable garden, inside a canvas. Credit: Matthew Field.

Eight-legged invasion as spiders head into our homes for warmth

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

WHEN pictures of a huge spider found in a Whitstable garden emerged, a shiver went down the spine of many arachnophobes in the county.

But wildlife experts, and the man who made the discovery, have come forward to say that the 'harmless' spider is nothing to fear.

Matthew Field found the *Segestria florentina* - commonly known as the tube web spider - inside a canvas.

"When I unwrapped it I saw the spider and took a few photos of it. I was just amazed, it wasn't in any hurry to run away," he told KoS.

"I spent the rest of the afternoon with it under my chair listening to Radio 6. I've not really looked for it since. I think it's either in my house now or it's gone back to its little canvas lair."

The spiders, whose bodies can grow up to 2.2cm long, are usually black with a metallic green shine around their fangs. It is believed that the one Mr Field discovered had just shed its skin - hence the lighter coloured fangs which he described as looking like 'two big sugar puffs'.

"An expert said that it had just shed its skin, and when that happens everything is still a bit wet, so it appears larger while it is drying out. So if I saw it again it might not look anything like it did when I saw it before."

The tube web spider is one of the largest in Europe, and while they can bite, they do not do lasting damage.

"From a general perspective we can say that they are not dangerous and

they are nothing to be concerned about," explained Joseph Burman, senior lecturer in biology and animal science at Canterbury Christ Church University.

Greg Hitchcock, of the Kent Wildlife Trust, said: "They are capable of biting. I have come across a few people who have been bitten and they experience a feeling like a pin prick and then experience a numbness from the venom, but I have not heard of anyone experiencing any other ill effects."

Steve Kirk, natural heritage officer at the Wildwood Trust, added: "They are totally harmless in the sense that they are sedentary. You wouldn't know they were there. There might be a male wandering about, but they are big enough that if you handle one carelessly they can give you a nip that you wouldn't enjoy. They are not aggressive. Males of all species wander. They are looking for females."

"If it bites you then treat it like a sting. What you absolutely mustn't do is scratch it. When you see these pictures of bites, they are infected spider bites, these are not done by the spider."

"It's where someone has scratched the bite and got a secondary infection. There are no spiders in this country that will do that to you."

The tube web spider is common in the county, but it is not usually spotted. It has earned its name by making its way into holes, such as cracks in buildings, and spinning a tube-shaped web.

"People don't tend to see them because most of the time they are tucked away in these holes and only come to the entrance at night to grab food."

"They don't actually hunt prey, they wait for things to pass the hole and then grab it and pull it in. They

are fairly opportunistic. They will eat things like woodlice, other spiders, anything that wanders past really," explained Mr Hitchcock.

The spiders build a kind of 'trip wire' to help alert them to prey.

"They wait for something to go across that and then they pounce on them," said Mr Kirk.

They were introduced to the country more than 100 years ago.

Mr Kirk said: "Originally they were a Mediterranean species. They have been accidentally introduced into this country. They are most commonly found in coastal areas or ports."

"They are all along the North Kent coast. Having said that, they have them in my village which is right slap bang in the middle of Kent, in the Weald. They are thought to be spreading because of climate change,

in the same way that the false widow is spreading, and when they do spread they are unobtrusive."

"The ones in my village are in a nice rag-stone wall with holes in between the stones where a little bit of the concrete has gone."

"They build a long tube web that goes right the way into that."

So what should people do if they find one of the spiders in their home or garden, like Mr Field did?

"If you scoop it into a container, like a plastic pot, and put it outside it will make its home again somewhere else and you will probably not see it again," said Mr Kirk.

Mr Hitchcock added: "If you see them outside just leave them alone, they are not doing anyone any harm. They are feeding on other insects in the house and around the gardens."

And Mr Field has shared the same message too.

"I would never kill a spider," he explained.

"I used to be terrified of them but I am not scared of them at all anymore. I remember when I was about 12 I found out house spiders could live about 12 to 15 years."

"As soon as I knew that I thought 'there is no way that I could tread on something older than me'."

"That was the start of getting over my fear of spiders. It's fascinating sitting in the garden and seeing all the different species."

"You have got a healthy garden if you have got a lot of spiders in it."

"If you see one just leave it alone, they are not interested in us, we are not their prey and they keep our gardens free from other insects."

STAG BEETLES DISCOVERED

ANOTHER unexpected discovery gave staff at Canterbury Christ Church University a pleasant surprise recently.

During an ecological appraisal called a BioBlitz, staff from the school of human life and sciences found stag beetles in the gardens of St Martin's Priory.

The stag beetle, which is known to experts as the *lucanus cervus*, is a large and distinctive species.

The stag beetle has become increasingly endangered and it has even become extinct in some parts of the country.

Professor Peter Vujakovic, chair of the University's Biodiversity Working Group, said: "Over-zealous clearing of old dead and decaying wood, for example,



grinding out tree stumps, is depriving these animals of a home for their larval stage."

"The larvae spend several years developing underground in rotting wood, and only emerge as adults

for a few months during the summer to breed."

"This find is an important indication that we are managing our site appropriately."

Joseph Burman, a member of the school's Ecology Research Group (ERG), agreed.

He said: "It is really exciting to find that we have a thriving colony of stag beetles on our campus, and that this is the result of years of sympathetic management by our excellent grounds team."

"In the area where they were found there is a good amount of dead wood, which they live on."

"I myself had been on site for a few years and never seen them."

"It turns out Canterbury is something of a hot spot."



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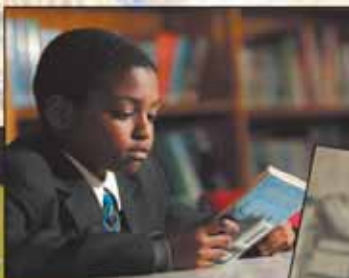


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Experts cast spotlight on Kent Test as pupils await their results

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A MAJOR conference focusing on the Kent Test takes place next month, casting the spotlight on what remains one of the county's most controversial education topics.

It takes place just days after Year 6 pupils who sat the test this month will have received their results; achieving the pass mark will make them eligible to apply for one of the county's in-demand grammar schools.

Staged at County Hall in Maidstone, the event is expected to be well attended by grammar and primary school representatives, school governors, parents and tutors.

Among those attending will be education consultant Peter Read. A former head teacher from Gravesend, he spent many years advising parents on the appeals process.

He explained: "This conference will look at the new Kent Test which

was introduced for the first time last year and the issue of alternatives. There are now five Kent grammar schools setting their own tests as an additional way of qualifying."

The 11-plus exam was altered in 2014 amid mounting concerns that it gave an unfair advantage to public school pupils and those able to afford home coaching.

State schools are unable to coach students in what they can expect of the test ahead of the exam.

High on the agenda of the meeting, on October 21, will be just how primary schools in the county approach the test and just what impact coaching has on the outcomes.

In addition, it will look closely at the appeals process and the range of expectations of standards for admissions to our grammars.

Among those attending, in addition to Mr Read, will be Matthew Bartlett, headteacher of Dover Grammar School for Girls. It is one of those schools with a separate entry exam as a result of being consistently heavily oversubscribed.

Emma Hickling, executive head teacher of Kingswood, Ulcombe, and Leeds & Broomfield primary schools in Maidstone brings extensive experience of advising parents on grammar school applications.

Also appearing will be Marylyn Atkins, a retired former grammar school head and now an education consultant and independent appeal administrator, who overseas grammar school appeals for seven schools.

Woody Webster, from event organisers Bright Young Things, explained: "The conference is planned to encourage open discussion of issues around the key themes, with the expectation that there will be opportunities to ask for individual advice from Peter and Marylyn in particular, on school admissions and appeals."

The event runs from 5pm to 7pm on October 21. It is being supported by Kent on Sunday. Tickets purchased before October 1 cost £10 or £20 after that date. For details see www.nationaltutoringconference.org.uk. The conference will be donating proceeds to the youth mental health charity Charlie Waller Memorial Trust.



Robot Wars fights to spark fresh generation of engineers

SCHOOLCHILDREN are being invited to design their own mechanical beasts as the Robot Wars Live show rolls into the Medway campus of the University of Greenwich next week.

The event is free for under-16s accompanied by paying adults, and the university hopes it will encourage youngsters to try their hand at creating their own robots.

Professor Simeon Keates, deputy pro vice-chancellor for the university's faculty of engineering and science, explained: "Hosting Robot Wars gives us the opportunity to help local schools learn more about the world of robotics."

"Winners of the design competition will be given the base materials and support by our

expert academic staff to build their own robots. The teams will also be invited to take part in next year's show, bringing their robots to battle in the famous Robot Wars arena.

"This year's show features some of the famous robots included in the hit TV series and is not to be missed. There will also be a chance to meet our own robotic TV star, RoboThespian."

Robot Wars ran for seven series between 1997 and 2003 on BBC2. The programme featured teams of amateur and professional engineers, whose robotic creations fought each.

The event runs from September 25-27. Tickets are £12. There are three one-hour shows per day - at 11am, 2pm and 5pm.



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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING

Tops marks for four-year trial of innovative IB qualification

Schools across county which took part in the career-focused course say it proved an asset to students, many of whom will now be starting university courses this month

A FOUR-year pilot of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Career-related Programme (CP) has been hailed a major success across the county, with 96 per cent of students securing a pass rate.

And it has proved so popular an additional two schools have started the course this academic year.

Like the acclaimed IB - which has been adopted with varying levels of success in a host of the county's schools over the years - it offers a broad spectrum of studies for those taking part.

And it proves a ticket to entry to a number of universities.

As the name suggests, the programme is designed for students seeking learning in a career-related environment, developing a range of transferable skills in applied knowledge, critical thinking, communication and cross-cultural engagement.

The six state schools in Kent involved were: Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre in Tenterden, Northfleet Technology College, Skinners Kent Academy in Tunbridge Wells, Sandwich Technology College, King Ethelbert School in Birchington and Ramsgate's Ellington and Hereson School. A total of 79 students took part.

Adding to that list is now the Malling School and the Canterbury Academy.

Pete Fidczuk, UK development and recognition manager at IB, said: "The pilot has given previously non-IB schools access to the

“ There are a number of benefits in terms of the additional skills and requirements the CP delivers that a more traditional package doesn't ”

Vicki Willis,
King Ethelbert School

whole continuum of programmes and has raised the aspirations of children from very deprived areas of Kent - some of the cohort are now the first in their families to be entering higher education and go to university."

The King Ethelbert School saw the biggest cohort celebrate success on results day with 25 students passing with flying colours. Some 60 per cent of the school's CP cohort will this month be starting at universities.

Vicki Willis, deputy head teacher, said: "Our students end up with an incredible academic package but the real beauty of it is probably the 'core' element which underpins all the individual academic studies the students learn, which gives them an experience in a foreign language and a different culture, in running a community project and experience in doing a reflective project rather



SUCCESS: Libbie Gadd from King Ethelbert's passed and is now off to university

similar to what you might do at university. There are a number of different benefits in terms of the additional skills and additional requirements the CP delivers that perhaps a more traditional package doesn't."

Dane Court Grammar School has been an IB World School for seven years and completely dropped A Levels in 2009 to offer its students a wider skills base through the IB programmes. Dane Court has acted as 'the hub' school for the Kent pilot, providing students from other schools with the opportunity to study CP when it wouldn't have otherwise been possible.

College confirms name change

NORTH West Kent College this week morphed into simply North Kent College as it unveiled its new name and branding.

The college, which has campuses in Dartford and Gravesend, said the move comes to highlight the fact it is now hoping to attract students from across the area.

Principal David Gleed explained: "We've invested £90million in new facilities at our Dartford and Gravesend campuses and we felt it was time to reflect the high industry-standard learning accommodation we now have, with a new modern brand and

change the name to reflect our wide catchment area across the whole of the north Kent and south east London Thames corridor.

"We are anticipating that the number of young people in our catchment area will increase further as Ebbsfleet Garden City grows and when London Paramount breaks ground mid-way between our two campuses. It's important to recognise therefore that north Kent will become a significant location in the region and that we are the key further education college to cater for the educational needs of this growing community."

And the principal says it will continue to invest heavily to ensure it keeps pace with developments.

He added: "As an education establishment teaching young people vocational skills to get them ready for the world of commerce and industry, it is vital that we develop new teaching and learning technology that is ahead of the game."

The name change follows in the footsteps of a host of other colleges in recent years. The collapse of K College saw the birth of Ashford College and the return of West Kent College, while Thanet College became East Kent College.

AV firm's academy

A SPECIALIST audio-visual company has teamed up with two schools to create a training academy designed to give students a taste of the industry.

Faversham-based Ideaworks, which installs top-end equipment into homes, businesses and even luxury yachts, has started the academy alongside the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and the Abbey School.

Secondary deadline

PARENTS of Year 6 students are being reminded they have until the end of October to apply for a secondary school place for their child.

The national deadline for applications is October 31 - although Kent County Council says it will accept entries up to November 2 to allow for the results of the Kent Test.

Girls fund guide dogs

STUDENTS at Benenden School are sponsoring two animals through the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

It follows an 'enquiry week' last term which saw lower fifth girls focus on issues around deafness and blindness.



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Pressure on profession is fast reaching breaking point in our schools

Education consultant and former head teacher **Peter Read** says the exodus of teachers from the profession shows no sign of slowing while the perception of the job needs to change in both the media and the wider community...



TEACHING is one of the most important professions in the country, as we place the futures of our children in the hands of our teachers. Good teachers enable young people to achieve their full academic and career potential, also developing their interests, and preparing them as citizens to play a full part in our society.

However, state school teaching is facing a crisis as Department for Education figures show that almost 50,000 teachers left the profession in the 12 months to November 2013 – the latest year for which figures are available.

This is an increase of 25 per cent over four years and represents around one in twelve of the number of full time teachers. Almost 4 in 10 leave the profession within a year of qualifying, a rate which has almost tripled in six years.

A recent survey by the Association of School and College Leaders found that more than two-thirds of secondary school head teachers and deputies in England are considering taking early retirement with most blaming an excessive workload.

The survey also showed that few deputy and assistant heads wanted to step up to become head teachers with only 25 per cent are considering such a promotion.

Another report records that one in

four academy heads left post in 2014.

This article explores some of the reasons for this exodus, pointing critically to government policy and practices in some schools.

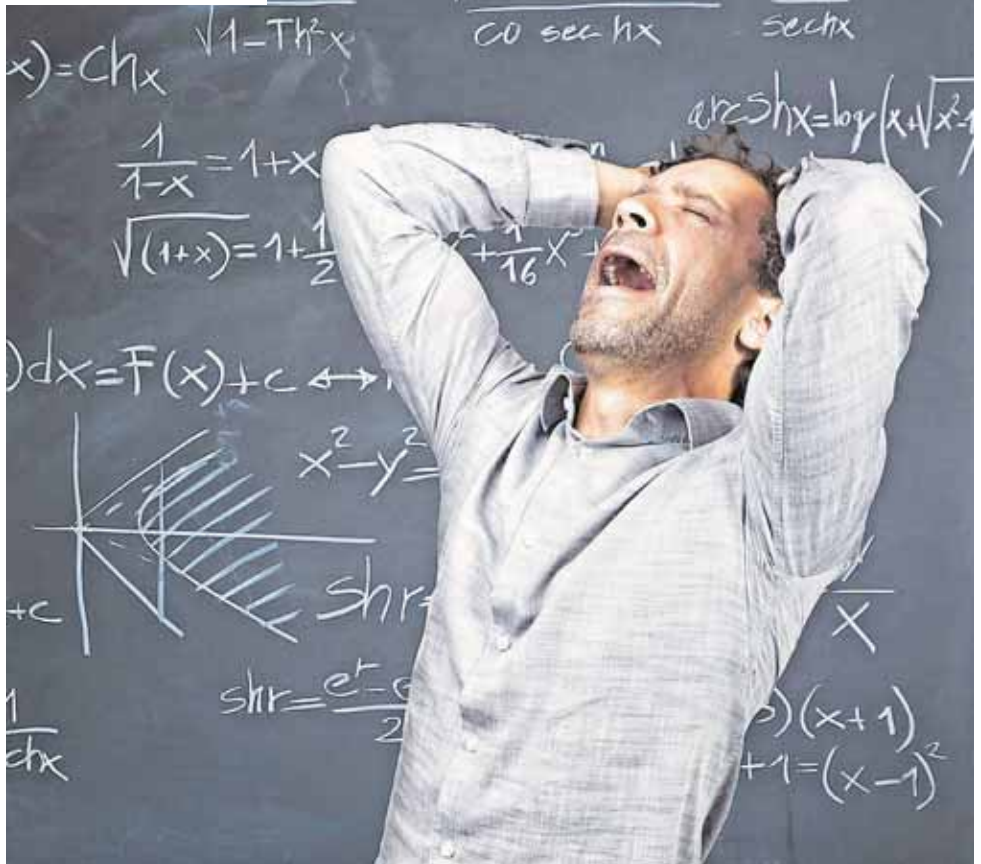
However, it should be remembered that the overwhelming majority of teachers are still carrying out a job or vocation they are/should be proud of, working in good schools that nurture and value their staff.

There is a shortage of good people coming forward to become head teachers, with over 1,000 heads and senior school staff leaving teaching before retirement age every year according to the NAHT.

The increasingly rapid turnover is covered in a variety of ways. These include: Federations, whereby one head teacher may take over a number of schools; Academy groups that can group a number of schools together under one 'Superhead' but which are also able to move head teachers from school to school without difficulty; long or short-term acting head teachers, sometimes turning into a series of appointments going on for years; or parachuting in local authority employed consultants on fixed terms.

The question is why is it all happening? Certainly, there is rightly more pressure to get rid of inadequate teachers who will make up a proportion of the numbers. However, workload, undue pressure, failure to sup-

CRISIS? With workloads mounting and government targets pushed ever higher, there is a real concern for the future of teaching



port or offer appropriate training, budgetary cuts, disillusionment, and the loss of esteem and respect in which the profession is held, all play their part.

First and foremost, there is an enormous potential cost to children and their futures if there is not a stable teaching team in place in a school.

One of the consequences of this loss of teachers, especially in primary schools, is the number of temporary teachers of varying quality needed to plug gaps.

Each year I talk to a large number of primary school families, mainly those looking for school appeals; but others looking for a change of school often for this precise reason. In both cases, I am horrified by the experiences of some who will talk about up to ten different supply and temporary teachers for their child in the school year.

There are also those who experience the rapid procession of temporary head teachers, after the permanent head has left the school. Sometimes this happens because the head teacher was removed because of low standards, but temporary cover does not improve matters.

I also talk with parents who have done their research to choose their primary school, and have chosen one with a good head teacher and good record. Then the head teacher leaves, staff don't like the change of regime, there is a large turnover and the whole school changes in character.

Unfortunately, this happens too often, there is no way of predicting it and you will find a number of the more extreme examples on my website www.kentadvice.co.uk.

In secondary schools, the use of temporary or supply staff can destroy a student's chances of success in an important qualification if they are not carefully selected, or good teachers are simply not available. Vocational subjects are being run down as government targets focus relentlessly on academic subjects, leading to possible redundancy for those teachers whose speciality no longer fits.

One of the problems that bedevilled the profession for many years was the difficulty of removing teachers who were failing their pupils. This has changed considerably in recent years and schools are much more ready to use competency procedures to begin the process, and in some cases pressure the teacher to leave.

Too often we read snide comments in the press and on social media of the long summer holidays. However, these comments are rarely balanced by reference to the long hours worked at home in the evenings preparing lessons and marking work, the weekends sacrificed to the same, or the extra-curricular activity still undertaken by many teachers out of commitment to the children in their charge, but unpaid and diminishing as pressures and lack of appreciation of its value increase.

Most of the pressure has government at its source, as the drive to improve the measure of academic performance is relentless.

The person most at risk is the head teacher, once in a secure position, but now extremely vulnerable to losing their post.

Kent County Council has seen its Primary Key Stage 2 performance improve rapidly over the past three years, the county council itself under government pressure to improve standards, coinciding with a purge of head teachers deemed not up to the job.

There is a similar purge in Medway, but without the results to justify it.

Good news for Kent schools in terms of performance, but at what cost, not taking into account what has happened to those heads dumped often after a previously successful career.

The future of the school is at stake if the school fails to deliver through Ofsted or assessment success, so pressure on the head teacher to deliver through his or her teachers is intense.

In some schools, this can become bullying; examples of alleged bullying are often disguised by those in charge as 'demanding higher standards for the good of the children'.

The third issue is lack of proper training, with some newly qualified teachers being thrown in at the deep end, because there is lack of time, resources or will to offer proper sup-

port. This then becomes sink or swim and I am sure contributes heavily to the four in ten who leave in that first year.

Schools are increasingly under financial pressure in spite of propaganda to the converse, and some, especially some academy groups, put pressure on older teachers to go or go early, and replace them with cheaper staff at the beginning of their career.

Again, it is easier to winnow these newly qualified teachers out by a process that becomes almost one of attrition. As with other issues, I strongly believe that the majority of schools provide good practice and offer a favourable environment in which to develop new teachers.

One key ongoing training issue is that of Special Education Needs, as the range of SEN challenges a teacher has to cope with in their classroom expands. One wonders how many have been taught to manage children with autism or ADHD, to give two examples of the many that may have to be faced in a single class, but still be expected to deliver.

Budgetary cuts are certainly squeezing the teaching profession, with the average teacher salary in academies below that in maintained schools, often to balance the higher salaries of leadership teams.

A more serious example lies in school sixth forms where there is no government commitment to hold budgets and funding has fallen rapidly. This is seeing schools with larger sixth forms having to cut minority subjects, often foreign languages.

Some non-selective schools will be looking closely at whether they can afford a sixth form at all, as it is increasingly subsidised by rescuing funding for the main school students.

Other methods to save money include reducing the number of examination subjects each student can follow and increasing class sizes. Each of these examples put pressure on schools to make teachers redundant or increase their workload further, many seeking a new life elsewhere.

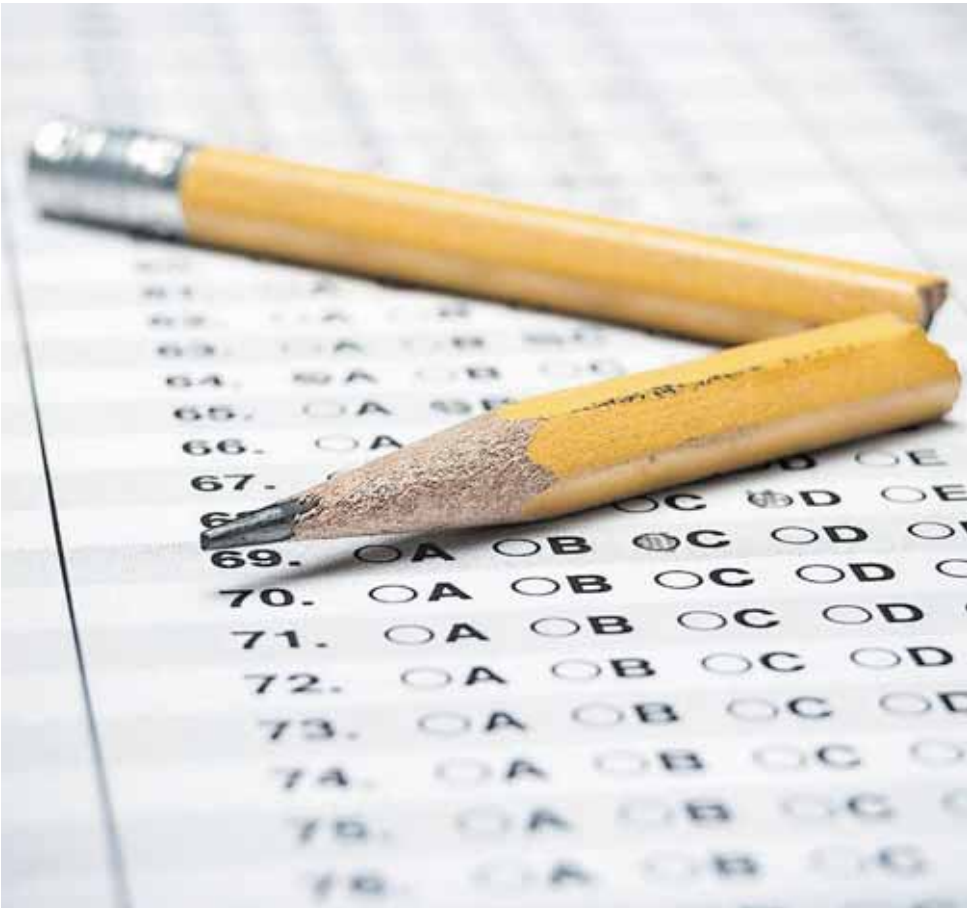
How the private schools must be rubbing their hands.

At least nurses and doctors faced with similar issues can comfort themselves with the public respect for their professions. Sadly, this country appears to have an astonishingly low opinion of its teachers and the teaching profession compared with other countries both in the developed and developing worlds and so we are starting to get what we as a country (but not the children) deserve.

Picture the teacher with a vocation to teach who comes home from a day's hard work under the pressures described above, too often encountering parents who don't value education or the work of the school.

He or she meets friends who don't hold their work in regard and enjoy a better work life balance, then sees s in the media with monotonous regularity the blame attached to their profession, if indeed it is still a profession, for so many of the ills of society.

Can we seriously be surprised if so many choose to look for a better life elsewhere?



"A STRONG FEATURE OF THE SCHOOL IS THE FAMILY-FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE WHICH PERVADES EACH SCHOOL DAY."

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CHALLENGE • CREATIVITY • COMMUNITY

Rural school to quadruple numbers

Hadlow Rural Community School has proved a successful free school since it opened in 2013. **Jamie Weir** reports.

JUST two years after opening its own free school, the apparently relentless success story of Hadlow College has been underlined by a planned huge increase in the school's numbers.

The Hadlow Rural Community School opened in September 2013 with some 60 pupils enrolling in what remains a school with its own unique selling proposition.

With a curriculum firmly rooted in the agricultural world, allowing it to dovetail with the well-established college, it is planning new buildings which will see some 330 pupils on its roll call.

Having also secured a 'good' Ofsted report this summer - although worth noting with no students yet having sat any GCSEs, it remains to be seen how well it stacks up when it comes to the school league tables - its head teacher Paul Boxall is looking forward to the expansion.

He told KoS: "To go from a standing start to good is a phenomenal



achievement, and something we're very proud of.

"We're now well on the way to getting outstanding; something which is impressive when you consider about 80 per cent of free schools are in need of improvement. Now we've got that solid foundation to build on, I'm confident we'll keep pushing forward."



GROWTH: Head teacher Paul Boxall, left, hopes the new buildings planned for the school will help it improve its 'good' Ofsted rating which it secured earlier this summer - just two years after it opened its doors for the first time

ple of permanent staff members, with a very small school. We've now expanded to 22 members of staff, and are set for the new school buildings to help us keep growing.

"One of the unique selling points for the school will be state-of-the-art science teaching, and in the new

building we'll get bespoke facilities which will really add to that offer."

It is the latest success for the Hadlow Group which took over the running of the Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford campuses of the failed K College last year.



Thamesview School

Open Evening

Thursday 8th October 6pm to 9pm

You are invited to Thamesview School's Open Evening to see our School in action! Thamesview is one of the most successful non-selective secondary modern schools in Kent and we wish to showcase our state of the art learning environments and student centred curriculum. Comments from our Year 7 students...

'I am looking forward to the next five years at Thamesview.' (Alex)

'My daughter cannot wait to come to school every day!' (Parent)

'We like the ethos of the school, its ambition and the way it helps everyone achieve their full potential.' (Parent)

'Thamesview is fun and enjoyable! I am looking forward to the future!' (Gemma)

Come and see what we have to offer!

Open Morning School Tours
(contact the School Office to book a place)
Monday 12th October - 9am
Tuesday 13th October - 9am

01474 566 552 thamesviewsch.co.uk

 [tvschl](https://www.facebook.com/tvschl)  [@ThamesviewSCH](https://twitter.com/ThamesviewSCH)

This has been another excellent year for students of Thamesview School. We have maintained our high standards in making sure that 55% of our Year 11 students achieved 5 or more A*-C grades including English and Maths. At a time when GCSE exams are getting harder our students have shown that hard work leads to exam success. 21% of our students achieved 5 or more A* to B GCSE grades; a fantastic achievement! 77% of our Year 11 students secured a C+ English grade and 65% achieved a C+ Maths. We also improved our EBACC result to 20% this year; this is a significant increase and demonstrates our commitment to high quality, academic education.

I would also like to say well done to our Year 10 students who have already achieved their English GCSE (42%) and Statistics GCSE (53%); this is a great foundation for their Year 11 studies.

These results have meant that this is another year at Thamesview where more students are going on to study A-Levels than ever before.

All staff have worked extremely hard this year and I would like to say well done to everyone that works at Thamesview and in particular to our dedicated teachers and learning support staff.

Congratulations to all our students on these excellent exam results! Of particular note are the following students:

Hannah Wells achieved 10 GCSEs including 3 As and 3Bs.

Mollie-Anne Wrench secured 10 GCSEs including 1A* and 5 As.

Emma Addy achieved 11 GCSEs including 1 A and 4 Bs.

Ryan Campbell secured 11 GCSEs including 5 Bs.

Connor Fenlon secured 11 GCSEs including 1A and 4Bs.

Ewan Greenway secured 11 GCSEs including 7 Bs.

Thank you also to parents and carers for their continued support.





CHALLENGE: The Norton Knatchbull in Ashford is just one of the grammar schools facing up to a harsh reality, as head teacher Susanne Staab, above, explains. Pictures: PAUL BENNETT



OPEN EVENTS AT MASCALLS ACADEMY
For entry into Year 7 2016/2017 & Sixth Form

Mascalls Academy is part of the LEIGH D

OPEN EVENING
Explore our school
Monday 28 September 5pm-8pm
No booking required

OPEN MORNINGS
See us in action
Tuesday 6 & Thursday 8 October 9am-11am
No booking required

For more information about Year 7 admissions, please contact Rachel Hirst, Marketing & Admissions Manager, Mascalls Academy, Paddock Wood. Email: hirst@mascalls.kent.sch.uk or tel 01892 839022



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Grammars fight against relentless wave of cut-backs

While all schools are feeling the pinch, our selectives are being hit harder than most. **Chris Britcher** visited one head teacher to get a sense of the impact

AN ETHICAL quandary for you... should grammar schools get more or less funding than non-selectives? Do you invest extra funding for a non-selective cohort which is likely to have a higher level of those requiring additional assistance in hitting targets; who need the best facilities to help them engage with subjects and flourish? Or do you pump funds into the selectives – helping those perceived as the brightest students, the so-called 'leaders of the future', to truly excel?

The answer is one which any grammar head would probably admit – privately or otherwise – is being won by the traditional high school.

But before those on the left celebrate, everything should be set in the context of widespread funding cuts which are eroding our schools and what they can offer at a time when

they have never been more under the political spotlight to deliver results.

And that is causing a major headache to many of our grammar schools who have found themselves – like all schools – staring at a dwindling bottom line under relentless pressure from budget cuts and no end to the suffering in sight.

Certainly grammars have been hit particularly hard.

Changes in funding for sixth form students has blown an almighty hole in what was once the post-16 cash bonanza; while many keen to upgrade parts of their estate crumbling in old age, are having to get the begging bowl out for private sponsorship in an effort to ensure they continue to offer the sort of compelling offering parents expect their students who have se-

Continued on page 40

Northfleet Technology College

Colyer Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8BG Headteacher: Jane Partridge
t: 01474 533802 f: 01474 536122 e: office@ntc.kent.sch.uk www.ntc.kent.sch.uk



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Thursday 8 October, 6:00pm – 9:00pm

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- A successful Sixth Form, enabling progression to university
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- Visits abroad - New York, France and skiing in Austria!





Continued from page 38

cured a selective school place, to receive.

Susanne Staab is head teacher at boys' grammar, the Norton Knatchbull in Ashford.

She has seen the school's overall funding plunge by a remarkable 36 per cent in the last year alone.

She admits budgeting is proving one of her biggest challenges.

She told KoS: "We have had restricted budgets since the coalition's comprehensive spending review kicked in back in 2011.

"Since then we have seen year-on-year decreases in budget. All schools have, but grammar schools, partially because of the make-up of the students, don't receive as much in terms of the pupil premium.

"We do see less deprivation, we do see fewer with traditional education special needs, we do see fewer children on free school meals. So that disadvantages grammar schools to that extent.

"The argument, of course, is that disadvantaged students need more money put into their education. Therefore grammar school students should be achieving more because of the type of student they are. And to some extent you can understand that.

"On the other hand, if you are trying to work with the most able section of the population year-on-year and you are trying to provide the next generation of leaders in all sectors of the economy, then why should they not be appropriately funded?

"Why should more able students have to study in sub-standard facilities? Why should they have bigger class sizes? Why should they have a restricted curriculum?"

If the government permits grammars to continue, it is a valid question.

Relying on a sixth form boasting core academic courses – rather than vocational – they admit funding for A-Level students has plummeted and, as a consequence, the sixth form now costs them more than it generates.

By the time you factor in the school's need for improvements to parts of its estate – it says some buildings date back to the 1950s and are in desperate need for replacement – and it admits it is growing increasingly concerned about just how it delivers what is expected of it.

Ms Staab says: "You only get told of your funding levels one year in advance. So in February you are informed of funding for the next academic year. We don't know what is in store for the next three years. But as a school we have to set a three-year budget.

"We will assume that 36 per cent decrease will continue – so we will have to operate to that. But that's not the worse case scenario. That's if the funding is cut yet further. But no-one knows what will happen."

The school, which now caters for just under 1,100 students, has plans to grow too – something which is not going to lessen as the demand for secondary school places across the county increases in the coming years.



The limits on its sixth form offering – it scrapped the acclaimed International Baccalaureate four years ago to focus purely on A-Levels – clearly hurts. But it still offers some 30 topics – something only achievable due to steps taken to ride out the first waves of big funding reductions.

"Speaking to many other grammar school heads," Ms Staab says, "many are offering just 15.

"The only reason we can run so many is that when we were first advised of the financial restrictions we were going to face five years ago, we underwent extensive restructuring measures.

"If funding continues to be cut we'll have to take steps – and that means reducing the curriculum and that may lead to staff redundancies.

"If we are very careful we may be

able to avoid that, but many other schools are unable to avoid that.

"I've spoken to many heads and there is nobody who is not facing deficits this year and up to £500,000 in year three. Not us, fortunately, but only because we took measures early on."

Earlier this year the girls' grammar in Ashford, the Highworth, was forced to reduce the number of A-Level subjects it offered as part of the great shakedown impacting on further education.

Where once schools and colleges waged war in pursuit of the 16-year-old wanting to stay in education, now an uneasy truce appears to be being called as school leaving ages are hiked up to 18.

Already, in Kent, North Kent College and MidKent College have confirmed they are no longer offering any A-Level courses due to the funding restrictions such academic courses now bring with them.

Far more lucrative are vocational, practical subjects which colleges are focusing on as schools continue to offer the classic A-Level topics.

Grammars, however, find themselves rather stuck.

"That's not the type of school we are," Susanne Staab says of vocational studies for 16-18-year-olds. "And that means we receive only the minimum funding."

After years of austerity cuts, is there hope on the horizon the chancellor may opt to allow the purse strings to loosen just a little?

"We have no hope of things im-

proving," says Ms Staab, "so we have gone down the path that many private schools already went down years ago.

"That is to appoint a marketing and fundraising officer on a small base salary and a share of funding he or she will attract."

And that is particularly relevant right now as the school focuses on improving its facilities while it also prepares itself for a due Ofsted inspection.

It wants to build a brand new Creative Arts Block to house music, art, design technology and computing facilities. But it's not cheap.

The total bill will be comfortably more than £5 million and the chances of the government handed it over without a fight seems remote.

Which means it is having to start a fundraising push for £500,000 – the amount it needs to show that it is sufficiently committed and there is the necessary demand, for the building to go ahead.

It held a major fundraising event this weekend and is hoping generous private sponsors will help increase offers, in addition to a host of initiatives such as offering students past and present the chance to buy an engraved brick to form part of the building.

It forms part of an ambitious programme of refurbishment and rebuild which the school is pursuing over the coming years.

For now, however, grammars have a more pressing concern – simply ensuring they can keep their heads above financial waters while delivering the results expected of them.



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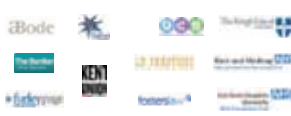
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PROGRESS: Norton Knatchbull has ambitious plans going forward to improve its site

OPEN EVENING



Prospective Year 7 parents and students will have the opportunity to discover more about The John Wallis Church of England Academy, meet our staff and students and explore our state of the art facilities at the following open events:

**TUESDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2015,
5.00PM - 8.00PM***

OPEN MORNING TOURS

9.00 am on Tuesday 6th, Wednesday 7th, Thursday 8th and Friday 9th October 2015.

To book a place on a morning tour please contact the Admissions Officer:
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or telephone 01233 662810.

* For the Open Evening pedestrian access will be via entrances on Stanhope Road and Millbank Road

The John Wallis Church of England 3 - 19 Academy
Millbank Road, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent, TN23 3HG

www.thejohnwallisacademy.org



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Ofsted

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Ofsted

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OPPORTUNITY: The school offers the International Baccalaureate alongside A-levels

Idyllic campus on offer for city pupils

KENT College is situated in a delightful 80 acre semi-rural location adjoining 200 acres of ancient woodland.

The idyllic campus overlooks the historic city of Canterbury, sitting in a tranquil location just a few minutes away from the city centre and within 55 minutes journey time of London and its airports.

Kent College is part of the Methodist Schools Group, though it happily welcomes pupils of all faiths, and none.

It is rich with heritage, having first opened in 1875, and over the past decade it has seen significant investment to enhance its facilities.

It is renowned as a particularly friendly and welcoming school with a strong family feeling.

The high expectations of the school mean that pupils of all ages are given every opportunity and

support to achieve academic excellence.

The school is regularly placed in the top 100 independent boarding schools for its academic achievement.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma runs alongside A-levels in the Sixth Form.

The school's IB results consistently place it in the top 10 nationally.

The School can proudly boast that almost all sixth formers go on to their first choice university, including Oxford and Cambridge.

This academic strength reflects the small class sizes and the quality of the exceptionally well-qualified, enthusiastic and experienced teaching staff.

A select number of pupils benefit from a specialist dyslexia unit where pupils are given individual support and direction so that they can progress easily through the school.

Improvements for academy's farm site

A SCHOOL farm is hoping to match its award-winning status with new state-of-the-art facilities.

New Line Learning Academy's site in Loose, Maidstone, has boasted its own working farm for over 35 years, complete with a range of animals including sheep, donkeys, cows, pigs, rabbits and poultry.

The hub is used by dozens of students, including pupils from its sister site Cornwallis Academy, less than two miles away in Hubbards Lane, Coxheath. The farm also houses the New Line Learning Young Farmers' Club, which won the top prize in its category at this year's Kent County Show.

When the Boughton Lane campus was rebuilt in 2010, the farm was left untouched but is now in need of refurbishment. Next month, New Line Learning plans to move the facility from its current position and relocate it closer to the academy, allowing neighbouring school Five Acre Wood to expand.

The proposed designs include two modern classrooms, an office, toilets, a small barn, paddocks and a horticultural teaching area.

NLL principal David Elliott said: "The farm is a fantastic facility and provides a wealth of hands-on experience for our agricultural students and Young Farmers' Club.

"By redeveloping the farm, we are ensuring it will continue to serve at New Line Learning



NEW: Pupils will get to benefit from the redeveloped farm site

for many years to come and the new facilities will help us to improve the quality of our courses even more."

The farm is used by a number of schools, including the four run by Future Schools Trust - NLL, Little Learners Nursery and Tiger Primary School and Cornwallis Academy.



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Outstanding inspection report finds
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SCHOOL GUIDE



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A CLOSER
LOOK

Open Evening: Tuesday, 22nd September 2015, 4.30pm-8pm
Presentations being held throughout the evening.

Open Mornings: 23rd, 24th and 25th September 2015
17th, 19th and 20th October 2015

Please call main reception for more details.

New Line Learning Academy

www.futureschoolstrust.com/nllacademy

New Line Learning Academy, Boughton Lane, Loose, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9QL

T: 01622 743286 E: officenll@futureschoolstrust.com



WELLESLEY'S position in the seaside town of Broadstairs is a hugely important part of what the school has to offer: no more rush hour or school run traffic for our boarders; they have time to fit in a host of activities and still have time to enjoy their childhood.

The sandy Thanet coast provides a glorious backdrop both to weekend outings and curriculum related study. The beach is a huge classroom offering space to explore and opportunities for independence, adventure and outdoor learning. Wellesley pupils use it for real geography, art sketches, beach combing for materials, inspiration for English writing, science investigations and more. Surfing, sailing, and wonderful Morelli's ice creams are all part of the magic mix too.

Schools are living, breathing and dynamic. They ebb and flow, and must never stand still for

to do so is to be left behind. Successful schools reflect the mood of the times and see into the future to set a new agenda, as Wellesley has done with the 'Hungry for History' campaign. As the founding school of this national project, Wellesley led the procession as part of the Waterloo 200 commemorative events down the Mall in June, in front of 50,000 spectators. However, Wellesley continues to strive for more. Following the successful Moon Rocks project in February, Wellesley has now been selected as one of 10 UK schools to have the possible opportunity to contact British astronaut, Tim Peake, using amateur radio while he is in orbit early next year on the International Space Station.

The Tatler Schools Report recently said of Wellesley that 'they do it so darned well'. Take a look at the Open Day on October 10 from 10am until 12pm to discover the 'Wellesley Way'.

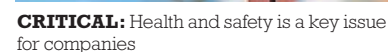
Shining a light on health and safety

LIGHTHOUSE Safety Training Ltd provides training and health and safety advice and assistance to a wide range of industries. The company's geographic reach covers London and the south east, but it also - on an ever increasing basis - works nationally. The company strives to ensure it provides a professional and realistic stance, as it aims to bring an enlightened approach to the term health and safety. The training courses offered are delivered across the whole of the UK with Lighthouse's range of experienced tutors in health and safety, ranging from awareness courses, operatives and director level training.

Lighthouse is very aware of its obligations to safety, health, the environment and its local community. It always looks to positively engage with clients, supporting them so that they can consider those aspects of their work too. Lighthouse will always strive to assist all course candidates so that they can achieve the very best possible results. That's illustrated by a pass rate which is 100 per cent for many of Lighthouse's courses, with more technical training courses still seeing 90 per cent of candidates pass.

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Week ending September 20, 2015 **43**

How Carr has driven spa town's high school back into fast lane

Molly Kersey speaks to the principal of the Skinners' Kent Academy in Tunbridge Wells - proof that failing secondaries can be turned around in style despite decades of poor results and low reputation

THINK Tunbridge Wells' education system and from the outside looking in, the town's perception of being awash with wealth and impressive architecture has been guilty in the past of disguising concerns.

After all, the town rather revels in its grammar schools being some of the most in-demand and successful in the entire county - much in part due to its proximity to the East Sussex border and the lure of those from outside the county wanting to capitalise from a selective slot.

But, like all towns, it contends with an undercurrent of deprivation.

And when it comes to its secondary provision, the school positioned closest to some of those areas most in need is the Skinners' Kent Academy.

Mining its mixed-ability students from, mostly, a three-mile radius, it has the areas of Sherwood and High Brooms within its catchment zone.

Formerly the Tunbridge Wells High School, prior to its transformation into an academy and resulting name change in 2009, it struggled to deliver the all important five GCSEs at A*-C grade including English and Maths.

In 2008 just 12 per cent of students secured the expected haul, lifting to 17 per cent in 2009.

Compare that today, and the Skinners' Kent Academy secured 48 per cent for 2014. It is a remarkable turnaround. Made more impressive by the fact its 'value added' score - in other words just how much have students progressed since starting the school - regardless of the level they enter it - is one of the very best in the country.

Sian Carr was the principal who saw the school's re-birth as an academy and remains in post today.

Her success and desire to pull the school up and re-inject pride into the surroundings were evident from day one.

New buildings and uniform returned needed pride and today she can reflect on a job which has seen her win plenty of plaudits.

Ms Carr told KoS: "We became an academy in September 2009 and became a completely different school from top to bottom. We had completely different leadership and

completely different governors.

"It was very exciting and a great opportunity. Tunbridge Wells has got grammar schools, it has got faith schools but it was lacking a school which could provide an all-around community education and didn't require people to choose selective education to pass the 11-plus. We wanted to give parents and the young people of Tunbridge Wells a real choice."

As with so many school transformations, the first fight was enhancing its reputation.

"It took a while for people to understand that it was really different and new and not the same, but for the last two years we have been over-subscribed," she said. "We had 40 appeals this year, people are now saying 'well we can't get into that school and we are desperate to'. It's a complete turn around."

Her achievements have won the regard of experts in the field.

Education advisor Peter Read, who runs the popular KentAdvice.co.uk website, told KoS earlier this year: "Skinners' Kent Academy is an example of what can be done with outstanding leadership, more important than the excellent new purpose built buildings it has recently moved into."

"For most of the past 40 years, its predecessors, variously named in attempts to shrug off a poor reputation, struggled to attract students, but in the past four years the academy has become the eighth most over-subscribed non-selective in the county, its headteacher, Sian Carr, being variously described as charismatic and inspirational."

“ It is an example of what can be done with outstanding leadership which is much more important than the purpose-built buildings it has moved in to ”

Peter Read,
Education consultant on academy

So what does she believe is the key to her success so far?

"It's having a strong belief that it can be done," she says, "and having as your focus the students and their education and their future lives, while making sure everything you do contributes to that."

She is quick to emphasise the strong support staff she has around her.

"They are just outstanding," she said. "These staff have given immeasurably to their students, completely voluntarily. They have provided revision sessions until 5pm every night, in the holidays, at weekends. These staff don't just prepare our students for their exams but also for extra-curricular activities."

"They are in the classroom every day inspiring them."

"Out ethos is of high achievement, high expectations, high standards and mutual respect, where all adults and students aspire to be the very best that they can be," she adds.

"We try to ensure that young

people have a sense of their place in the world and the ways they can play a significant and positive part in their world."

The school is due an Ofsted inspection soon - its last, in 2012, branded it 'good'.

Adds Ms Carr: "We continue to get very positive reviews from a range of people, but the Ofsted report was key and I think it tallies really well with what we are about," she said. "It used words like resilient and enthusiastic and pragmatic, which we have worked very hard to achieve, so of course it's very gratifying."

Today the school is almost completely different to the one it replaced courtesy of major investment in bricks and mortar.

"It's a completely new building," said Ms Carr. "We worked in the old building for four of the six years and received our good and outstanding Ofsted in the old building."

"Two years ago we moved into our new building. I worked very closely with the architect for four years to get the building that we have got. It's more like a business or a professional learning environment."

And Ms Carr has a number of plans for the future of the academy too.

"We have just completed our five year strategic plan. We are opening a primary school," she said.

"Initially it will be on our current site but there will be a new building near to Knights Wood. We are starting with reception and we are again, over subscribed."

"They are going to be very much part of our family, the whole point is to have a continuum of learning from age four to 18."



BLOOMING: The Skinners' Kent Academy has transformed the fortunes of its students since emerged from the embers of the Tunbridge Wells High School in 2009





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'Dead' school sites set to bloom into life again to cope with expected boom



FAILED: A dramatic decline in numbers left Chaucer in impossible position

Politicians are only too aware that failing schools closing now will soon need to re-emerge under a new regime in order to cope with the rise in secondary need. **Jamie Weir** reports.

THERE is something slightly unnerving about an abandoned school; a selection of buildings which normally teem with young people, youthful enthusiasm and a tangible sense of life now empty and silent.

Yet since the last GCSE was sat this summer, the Chaucer Technology School in Canterbury died and the site was mothballed. The vast majority of its students long since distributed around the district's other schools.

Those who made up the final year group did so alone - chasing the grades they wanted unhindered by the chatter of lower - or higher - age groups.

Yet, the Chaucer's collapse from once in-demand high school with reasonable achievement levels and a strong reputation among parents, to one where Ofsted and poor results turned the tide in the space of a mere

handful of years where it struggled to fill its classrooms, should stand as a reminder to all that you're only as ever as strong as your last set of exam results.

But with talks of a crisis in secondary school places apparently just around the corner, just what now for a building which has all the facilities - just none of the students or staff?

The answer, it seems, is to emerge like a phoenix from the flames in a few years, according to Kent County Council education chief, Roger Gough.

He explained: "Under the current national funding regime, there is less flexibility for us to provide financial support for schools which are experiencing difficulties. Chaucer received a double blow, as it also happened to suffer a loss of popularity at the same time as there were fewer children requiring secondary education. Because funding is so dependent on pupil numbers, that

loss of popularity meant numbers shrank back, and left it financially no longer viable."

That loss of popularity had left the school with just 600 pupils in February 2014 - a loss of around 250 over the past year. It was in such a parlous state financially that the school would have had to cut back on its staff, to such an extent in order to get rid of its deficit, that it would have no longer been able to function properly.

Adds Cllr Gough: "The Oasis Academy in Hextable is a very similar case to what happened at the Chaucer. It lost popularity, and as a result it is set to close. The problem with that is that we will need more capacity in that area of the county very soon. The academy is likely to need to be replaced even sooner than Chaucer."

Now the focus is on juggling the demands today with the need

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FUTURE: Site of what was once the Chaucer Technology School, left and right, will see a new school emerge in the future insists KCC cabinet member for education Roger Gough, right. School pictures: LA DELUGE

for expansion tomorrow.

The cabinet member for education told KoS: "With the Chaucer, there had been quite a big surplus of places in Canterbury, much of which was actually in the school itself.

"With its closure, that was taken away, resulting in extra pressure on the other secondaries in the area."

Yet while the situation is acceptable now, there will be a need for places that grows significantly as we move through the next few years.

Adds Cllr Gough: "The birth rate was relatively low in the early part of the century. That, however, rose as we moved through the first few years, and it is those births which we are now seeing progressing from primary to secondary education.

"Within the next three or four years, there'll be a shortage of places in Canterbury, and that's something we need to start planning for now."

The council has already been in discussion with a number of Canterbury's

schools to provide those much needed places.

One school the council has approached is Barton Court Grammar School – a stone's throw (or two) from the site of the now dormant Chaucer buildings. At the beginning of this month it submitted a planning application for a significant expansion project that would increase its capacity. The school said that currently it is using a site designed for 550 pupils to cater to 888 students.

The proposed development would see a new block on the school field. The proposals would include a new main entrance to the school, car parking for staff and visitors, bus drop-off and pick-up points, school hall, kitchen and dining facilities, washrooms, three science labs and seven classrooms.

Head teacher Kirsten Cardus announced the new development plans in a letter to parents at the school.

In it, Ms Cardus said: "There will be no change to the admissions policy but in time it is expected that the published admission number will increase from 128 to

150, starting in Year 7 and rising. "In time, the new build will also provide an opportunity for the school to expand to five forms of entry when secondary numbers in the district permit. The local authority has been in discussion with the school for some time as it is expected that an additional form of selective places will be required in the district from 2017 or 2018."

The education chief confirmed it had been in discussions with Barton Court about its expansion, telling KoS that 'the site around Chaucer would be very busy'.

It isn't though, according to Cllr Gough, the only school that KCC have been talking to.

"We've already started discussing the situation with a number of schools," he said. "Over the next three or four years, we'll need to make some incremental additions to school place provision. The Spires Academy is one of them, and we're also in discussion with the Canterbury Academy to provide sixth form places on the site of the former Chaucer school. There are some buildings on the Chaucer site which will be used by the Canterbury Academy in the future."

The issue of sixth form provision, of course, has changed as dramatically - and over the same time span - as the Chaucer's demise.

Many schools are now radically rethinking just what they offer to students to ensure the sums add up.

Adds Cllr Gough: "We'll certainly be retaining the site at Chaucer and it's very likely we'll see a secondary school reopened on that site."

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To find out more, go along to the next Open Day or call Amanda Selmon on 01227 475601.

Scholarship scheme proves big success

VINEHALL School in Robertsbridge is soon to start its scholarship awards process for entry to the school in September 2016.

Vinehall, one of the region's leading independent prep schools for girls and boys aged two to 13, has a long standing reputation for top academic results as well as excellence in sport, music, drama and art, actively encouraging success in these areas through its scholarship programme.

Scholarships are available for motivated and aspiring children who will benefit from the school's excellent teaching and outstanding facilities. Children who show a genuine desire to foster and develop their abilities may apply for a scholarship.

Vinehall children regularly go on to secure scholarships at their chosen senior schools at the end of year eight.

Scholarship applications are welcomed from parents of children applying to enter the school in years four, five, six and seven.

Scholarships are awarded to children who possess a high level of academic ability, as well as in sport, music, drama and art. Children awarded a scholarship receive additional support and coaching in their area of strength through the Vinehall Able, Gifted and Talented Programme. Scholarships may be augmented with bursary support up to 100 per cent of the school fees subject to means testing.

PROSPECTS: Pupils picked for the scholarship tend to get one for secondary education

Families interested in applying for a scholarship award should register their interest with Karen Cooper, registrar at Vinehall School on 01580 883090 or by emailing admissions@vinehallschool.com.

To find out more about the school, visit www.vinehallschool.com





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Growing reputation sees school flourish

ST LAWRENCE College in Ramsgate is a thriving independent co-educational school for children aged three to 18-years-old. After considerable growth in pupil numbers over the last couple of years, the new school year has begun with 415 pupils in the Senior School and 200 in the Junior School, representing a growth of about one third in the last few years. The Senior School is now effectively full and has had to apply a waiting list for entry and there is limited availability for some year groups in the Junior School.

Principal of the school, Antony Spencer, said: "The growing reputation of St Lawrence as a happy and successful community is reflected in the growth of the School and we are continuing to invest in excellent new facilities in response."

The Junior School
Children flourish in the secure and positive atmosphere. High academic standards alongside excellent SATs results and 11+ preparation are complemented by a wide range of extra-curricular experiences.

Personal attention is given within small classes where talents are recognised and needs are catered for.

Teaching is carefully differentiated to stretch and inspire the most able whilst supporting and encouraging those whose confidence is still devel-



ATMOSPHERE: A positive and secure learning environment at the school helps pupils grow

oping. An extended day and flexi-boarding are also offered to assist working parents.

The Senior School
With small class sizes and strong pastoral support, the school has a long record of providing an excellent

academic education within a supportive community.

The school upholds traditional values whilst being modern in its outlook, preparing pupils for a rapidly changing world.

Academic standards are high, and

impressive results are achieved across all years in the school.

An extensive choice of GCSEs and A-levels are offered, with an excellent success rate of pupils going on to their first-choice university.

If you are considering St Lawrence

College for your child in September 2016, the advice is to register sooner rather than later to ensure a place!

Go along to an October Open Day to see what the School has to offer.

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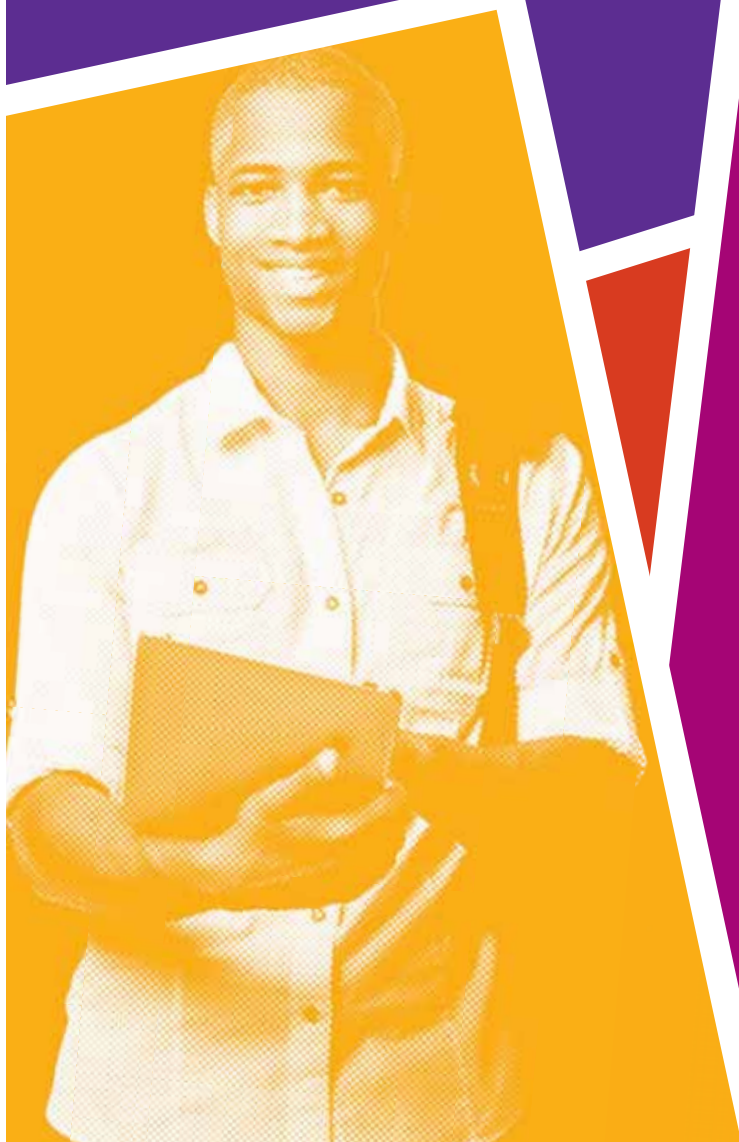
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SEALED IN BLOOD: Twin brothers parted at birth form a bond despite circumstances

B B h B

Still a powerful dramatic force

The dramatic and heart-wrenching musical is at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre with its focus on the class system and just what makes someone the person they are. **Molly Kersey** reviews Willy Russell's *Blood Brothers* as it celebrates its 29th anniversary...

THROUGHOUT history, the same question about human psychology has been raised. Is it nature or nurture that makes us who we are?

Does the person we become depend solely on our DNA, or are we formed by our environment and upbringing?

Blood Brothers makes a very strong case that nurture can play a huge part in determining the opportunities we get.

The dramatic and heart-wrenching musical tells the story of twin brothers who are separated at birth.

The production is powerful, featuring impressive lighting and an excellent musical score.

Marti Pellow excels as the dark-suited and sinister Narrator, who watches events unfold from the shadows and reminds the characters of the secrets that are weighing heavily on their conscience.

Mrs Johnstone, played brilliantly by Maureen Nolan, is a single mother already at her wits end trying to support a large family.

She discovers she is pregnant with twins, and while she has enough of an income to care for one more baby, she cannot fathom how she will manage with another two.

She cleans for the affluent Mrs Lyons, who has been unable to conceive a child.

And so a plan is hatched.

Mrs Johnstone will give one of the babies to Mrs Lyons, who will raise it as her own, and they will never tell a soul.

It is a terrible idea from the beginning, and one that the audience knows will end in tragedy.

In a hair-raising scene, Mrs Lyons forces Mrs Johnstone to swear to their agreement on the Bible, later telling her that 'if either twin learns that he is one of a pair, they shall both immediately die'.

While the two try their best to keep the children apart, they soon meet and form a firm friendship.

Mickey lives a wild and unrestricted life with Mrs Johnstone, running around playing with toy guns with his siblings and childhood friend Linda.

Eddie on the other hand, raised by Mrs Lyons, is dressed immaculately and has impeccable manners.

Their affection for each other is touching, and despite the best efforts of their parents they form a bond and decide to be 'blood brothers', knowing nothing about the startling truth that lies be-

hind this endearing childhood pact.

We see them have fun, but we also see the differences in the way that these two brothers are treated – because of their social classes.

When they are arrested as children, the policeman who takes Mickey home is rude and abrasive, threatening his mother with court.

When he takes Eddie home, he shares a drink with his father, tells him his son is a 'good boy' and implies he would do better if he didn't mix with people outside of his social class.

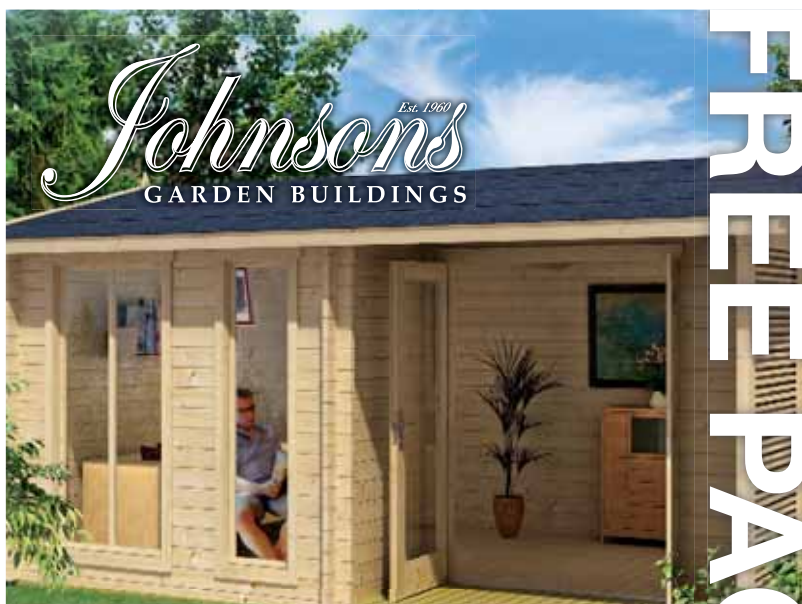
They put this to one side as teenagers, enjoying an idyllic summer together along with Linda, who has fallen hopelessly in love with Mickey.

But this can only last so long, as the Narrator tells us in chilling rhymes. It is only a matter of time before resentment creeps in and the differences in their lives become too apparent to ignore.

As Mickey becomes unemployed, falling into crime and drug addiction, and Eddie excels at university and becomes a Councillor, jealousy rears its ugly head and things take a dark and awful turn.

Blood Brothers will be at the Marlowe Theatre until September 26. Visit www.marlowetheatre.com to book.

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ICON: Dame Zandra Rhodes and fellow designer Andre Leon Talley (above) and (inset) celebrating collecting her Damehood earlier this year

Dame Zandra – the transatlantic fashion icon with Medway roots

Her clothes have been worn by royalty, celebrities and fashionistas, she has had her own area at Fortnum and Mason and was once known as the 'Princess of punk' but Dame Zandra Rhodes used to live in Chatham and studied at Medway College of Art. **Molly Kersey** finds out more...

RENOWNED for her bright pink hair and even brighter clothes, Zandra Rhodes has been making waves in the fashion industry for decades.

Her dresses have been worn by legendary performers, members of the royal family and celebrities alike – with Freddie Mercury, Princess Diana and Kelly Osborne among the famous figures she has designed pieces for.



TRUE TO HERSELF: Dame Zandra says find your own path

And she began her life in the county, living in a Medway town.

The colourful designer, with her extravagant make-up, artistic jewellery and trademark dresses, has many strings to her bow.

As well as making her impressive mark on the world of fashion, she set up the eye-catching pink and orange Fashion and Textile Museum in London in 2003, has designed sets and costumes for the opera and collaborated with make-up brand MAC to create a limited edition range.

She was thrilled at meeting the Queen earlier this year and becoming a Dame in the monarch's latest honours list, in recognition of her contribution to fashion and textiles.

"That was lovely, going to the palace and having a special hat. It was all very exciting," she said.

She has fond memories of her time spent in the county.

"I lived in Chatham until I went to the Royal College of Art at the age of 20," she told KoS.

"I loved it. Our house was right on the top of The Downs on top of

Chatham Hill, and it had a view that stretched right across.

"When I was at art college I would get a bus or a bike and go all along the lower Upnor Road, along the side of the river."

Her mother taught at the Medway College of Art, a college which she also attended when she was 18, with the fact they were related something of a badly kept secret on the campus.

Her mother was also involved in fashion, working as a fitter for a French house of high fashion – House of Worth.

"I was very aware my mother was always putting lovely dresses together," said Dame Zandra.

She still visits the county from time to time, with connections to education establishments in the area.

"The last time I visited was when, as Chancellor of the University of the Creative Arts, I came down to Rochester for a ceremony in the cathedral and there was a reunion of a whole lot of old students, about four or five years ago," she said.

"It was very funny seeing how it

had all changed over the years."

So just how did her impressive fashion career begin?

"I loved art. I was always painting and drawing. I didn't see myself going into fashion until halfway through my course," she explained.

"It wasn't until I went to the Royal College that I knew. I decided I wanted to do dress textiles, and people hadn't been doing that for a long, long while.

"At that time I thought I would do dress textiles but wouldn't be involved in making clothes. That only came about because of wanting to show how the dress textiles would look made up on the body.

"Then when I left the Royal College and was doing dramatic and big prints that no one had ever done before I realised that I had to create the clothes myself, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to get my prints used.

"I got a first class honours degree and went to Manchester to try and sell my designs, but no one would buy them. They all thought they were too extreme."

But she didn't realise how branching out on her own to create her dresses would snowball into the incredible career that spanned so many decades.

In fact, it wasn't a decision that she actually thought too much about, she explained.

"When you are younger, you go into something and you don't even see the choices, you don't even see that the journey is going to be a difficult one. You just go into it thinking 'this is what I want to do'. I didn't think about anything like that at that time, I just knew that I wanted to do dress textiles," she said.

Then, after setting up on her own, she took her clothes to New York in 1969.

This would prove to be a vital stepping stone to the huge success that was to follow.

"That was amazing," she said. "I met Diana Vreeland and she was absolutely incredible. She raved about my things and featured them in American Vogue and from there I was introduced to shops and went on

kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk

ART LAUNCH

DAME Zandra Rhodes will be appearing at the Christopher Guy Showroom in New York to launch Fashion is Art on October 1.

The event will see the celebrated designer officially launch her artwork with the Christopher Guy brand.

Her work includes reproductions of original textile design as paintings and will be available in stores around the world.

She will be at the showroom with fellow textile and fashion designer Andre Leon Talley, and the pair will be speaking about their work.

For more information, visit www.christopherguy.com.



1980s: Royals and celebrities are big fans of the Medway-educated fashion designer



to the rest of my career really."

It is hard to imagine that her designs were ever rejected, given all that followed soon afterwards.

She started selling to stores like Henri Bendel in New York, and then Sakowitz, Neiman Marcus and Saks.

In the UK, Dame Zandra was given her own area in Fortnum and Mason, London, and she was named designer of the year in 1972 and royal designer for industry in 1974.

She created designs that helped to put London on the international fashion map, pioneering a pink and black jersey collection with holes and beaded safety pins that earned her the title of 'Princess of punk' in 1977.

Iconic actress Helen Mirren wore a Zandra Rhodes dress when she received her BAFTA award and Sarah Jessica Parker wore one of her dresses on well-loved American show *Sex and the City*.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, with a brilliant career that was going from strength-to-strength, the 1970s were a fantastic time for Dame Zandra.

"It was still when Beatlemania was going and it was the sixties turning into the start of the hippy seventies. I went around with lots of exotic make-up and long kaftans. It was amazing period," she said.

"It was a whirlwind of experiences where I met all these people. I went to Paris to deliver a wonderful dress to Paloma Picasso. It was all quite a mad time. I lived it but I didn't realise how mad it was."

And with success came introductions to a whole host of famous faces.

"I used to enjoy making clothes for Princess Diana and going round to the palace.

"Freddie Mercury came round with Brian

to my studio. I was just making them something lovely that he could wear on stage. It's in the picture that you always see of him in the flowing pleated top.

"That side of it is really rather wonderful. I am lucky he was captured in that photo so it's the one that people remember."

So where does she get her inspiration for the bold designs that celebrities galore have adored?

"It's a whole variety of things. I might be in a hotel and see a flower and draw it - I used to do a lot of flowers. I'd have them in a room and draw them and that would lead to another design," she said.

And in terms of advice for any budding fashion designers hoping to make their way into the industry, the Dame recommends being true to yourself at all times first and foremost.

"You have to be honest with yourself, shut yourself away and do some designs that you feel are coming out of your system," she said.

Speaking about her own designs, she added: "They were things that were inside of me that I worked on, and it wasn't done with the intention that they would be unique or whatever, they were just designs that were inside me."

"I wanted to design and I loved designing, and it becomes a case of trying to work out where that will take you."

She is currently in California, where she resides with her long-term partner in San Diego. She splits her time between the US and UK.

"There is an appeal to both places," she said.

"I am very English. I created a museum in London and when I am in town I live on the top of that in a penthouse. I expand my work to fit in different places.

"I enjoy English weather. I am quite happy being shut inside working."



CAPTURING THE MOMENT: Classic Zandra Rhodes shapes and colours

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LOCATION: Aerial view of the site which includes the former Chattenden Barracks, which the MoD wants to see developed into a major new community near Rochester

Lodge Hill plans push forward as developer pulls out at cost of £11m

Chris Murphy looks at the latest twist in the long-running saga of plans to build 5,000 new homes on a brownfield site in Medway which started in 2011 and shows little sign of being resolved this year...

JUST days after the developer driving forward the controversial plans for 5,000 homes on a site in Rochester withdrew another has taken its place.

Opponents had hoped news property giant Land Securities had pulled out of the Lodge Hill project, having already spent some £11 million, could spell the end of it.

The site has proven something of a headache for Medway Council, after it first received an outline planning application for development on it from Land Securities in 2011. The council then included the area in its core strategy – the planning document which sets out long term development – in 2013.

It's ability to take so many homes was seen as a key plank in ensuring the council hit its housing targets.

The brownfield site – formerly the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) Chattenden Barracks – appeared the perfect site for the council to build on. As previously developed brownfield land, few thought it wouldn't get the green light for redevelopment.

However campaigners against the development had other ideas, and in November 2013 the government's environment protection agency, Natural England, designated it a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its importance for the dwindling nightingale population.

The council though, had committed to developing the site, and so pushed forward with its plans, giving the nod to Land Securities' planning application in November of last year.

The SSSI status afforded to the site

brings with it a host of hurdles before any building can begin, and despite cross-party support from the council, the planning application which Medway had granted permission to was 'called in' by the minister for communities and local government in February this year. That put a stop to any work at the site.

And clearly Land Securities, the UK's biggest property firm, have now grown tired not only of the delays but also the huge expense it has already incurred.

A Land Securities spokesman said: "I can confirm Land Securities is no longer progressing the masterplan for a development at Lodge Hill."

And in the company's 2015 annual report, it tells its shareholders: "In relation to our long-term contract at Lodge Hill, Chattenden, where we have been working on behalf of the Ministry of Defence to obtain the necessary permissions to enable residential development, we have recognised a loss of £11.3m due to increased uncertainty over the recoverability of our costs to date following the disappointing decision by the secretary of state to call in the proposed scheme for public inquiry."

However now a fresh team of consultants has stepped forward to spearhead the development.

Led by Amec Foster Wheeler – a British-led multinational project management company – it is joined by GVA and Shoemiths. They will now be tasked with arguing the case when the development goes to a public inquiry, which will decide whether or not the scheme should go ahead.

For Medway Council, still keen to see development take place, it is keeping a watching brief.

A spokesman explained: "We remain just the planning authority in this scheme."

"Companies are free to bring us plans and we will deal with them as we are required to do. This one has already been called in for the government to fully assess it, and that remains the situation."

"We and other parties are preparing for a public inquiry which will consider development proposals for Lodge Hill."

"The council continues to support the development which, if given the go ahead, would create a new community comprising of 5,000 homes, three primary schools, a secondary school, medical facilities and leisure and retail space on the Hoo Peninsula, providing up to 5,000 jobs."

Medway is in desperate need of new homes to help address a shortage.

Keen on Lodge Hill progressing quickly, it finally passed a second batch of plans a year ago, but things have moved at a snail's pace since then. The previous application was ordered to be binned by the government's planning inspectorate.

The authority had hundreds of letters against the idea, and they were joined by official objections from a raft of organisations, including the RSPB, Buglife International, the Woodland Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation, and even the Dickens Countryside Protection Society.

One of the leading objectors is the Kent Wildlife Trust, based in Maidstone.

Spokesman Greg Hitchcock told us: "While we can see as positive that

Land Securities thought it was too risky to be involved, it doesn't really change the situation because the MoD, unfortunately contrary to its own policies regarding SSSI, is still committed to pursuing the application."

Faced with a heaving mass of leading experts being amassed by the host of planning agents being taken on to push the plans past the public inquiry, Mr Hitchcock said he remains confident of winning.

He told us: "We think we have quite a good case. The site is nationally important and the Medway Council core plan has been ordered changed by the planning inspector once."

"Medway Council now has to convince another planning inspector that the benefits of building at this particular site outweigh meeting their needs using other available sites and that is quite a tricky thing to do."

COULD THE SITE BE THE 'THIN END OF THE WEDGE'?

LODGE Hill campaigners say that allowing any development on the site would be the thin end of the wedge, setting a precedent that nature was not as important as building.

The decline of the nightingale population by more than 90 per cent since the 1960s has provided one of the most compelling cases against development of the site.

When it was designated a SSSI, the nightingales which use the area were cited as the primary reason to protect the land. However, conservationists say there are a lot

of other species which should be protected at the site too, with grass snakes, adders, slow worms, bats, bees and badgers found at Lodge Hill. It's also one of just 18 homes across Britain for the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly.

The army of objectors say that if the camp falls to the developers, other SSSIs across the UK could suffer a similar fate.

Oliver Newham, Woodland Trust Campaigner, told us: "We'll undoubtedly be maintaining our objection to this development proposal. To allow it to go ahead

would sever at least two ancient woods from their surrounding historic landscapes, causing irreversible damage and would set a dangerous precedent for developing in SSSI habitat."

"Ancient woodland is irreplaceable – once lost, no amount of new planting can ever recreate a habitat of the same value for wildlife. With just two per cent of the UK covered in this precious habitat but 600 ancient woods currently under threat from development, the national significance must be taken into account."



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INCREASE: The number of people being tested for HIV has risen

Project shows rise in number of people being tested for HIV

Figures in Kent and Medway have seen a rise after campaign to raise awareness, writes **Molly Kersey**

THE number of people in the county being tested for HIV has seen an increase, a study published by Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) has shown.

The virus attacks the immune system, which decreases the ability to combat diseases and infections.

There are a number of treatment options that are available for people who test positive, and with the combination of an early diagnosis and the right medicine, HIV will not usually develop into AIDS.

And so the project, funded by the Interreg IVA Channel programme, was aiming to improve two things.

The number of people who get tested for HIV, and the speed at which they choose to do it

And the results are looking promising, with a significant rise in people being tested in Kent and Medway.

Those behind the project say that these findings have shown the effectiveness of a threefold strategy when it comes to getting people to come forward for a test.

A combined approach, which involves using social media, educational interventions and a more targeted public health campaign to reach people – has been credited for the rise.

The study was completed by staff at the university along with colleagues from Kent County Council and NHS partners in Kent and Medway.

The public health campaign included posters and leaflets being displayed across the county showing the 'It's better to know your HIV status' motto and a designated Facebook and Twitter page featured on Kent County Council's public health webpages,

which told people about the testing opportunities in their local area.

The number of HIV tests that were undertaken in Kent and Medway over a five month period between October 1, 2014, and February 28 this year increased by 7.8 per cent - a rise of 1,946 people.

This saw the overall total increase from 24,874 to 26,821 tests in comparison to the same time period from 2013 to 2014.

Percentage increases varied from 4.4 per cent for the area covered by Kent Community Health Foundation Trust to 13.9 per cent for Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust with Medway Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust showing an increase of 7.6 per cent.

Dr Stephen O'Connor, from the school of nursing at Canterbury Christ Church University, was optimistic about the results.

He said: "This project, and its subsequent results, has been a valuable exercise as it has shown that we can improve the health outcomes for patients with HIV via earlier diagnosis and treatment."

And, as those involved in the project have been keen to stress, the quicker that you are diagnosed, the better it will be for your health.

"Around half of all patients diagnosed HIV positive in Kent and Medway are diagnosed at a late stage," added Dr O'Connor.

"If someone is diagnosed a long time after they have been infected with HIV, it is more likely that the virus will have already seriously damaged their immune system.

"Late diagnosis is one of the biggest contributing factors to illness and death for people with HIV.



RESEARCH: Dr Stephen O'Connor was involved in the project

"Early diagnosis is important so people can start treatment if they need to, look after their own health and take steps to ensure they don't pass the virus on."

KCC public health consultant, Faiza Khan, explained: "The targeted public health messaging, social media and training for healthcare professionals was in response to the findings of the research conducted by CCCU, as part of a Health in Europe research programme, which was established to help understand the reasons for HIV being diagnosed late in the stages of disease.

"Kent and Medway had higher rates of late diagnosis of HIV than the England average."

She added: "The campaign to raise awareness of and increase access to HIV tests gave opportunity for the public to learn more about HIV

through radio interviews and adverts, publicity and a website.

"The campaign increased access to HIV testing by publicising and offering these in the community in non-clinical environments and through the work undertaken with health care professionals, who offered tests where it was clinically indicated.

"The report completed by CCCU illustrates the scope of activity undertaken in order to achieve an increase in HIV tests undertaken, much of which could have been expected to be attributed to this campaign."

The tests for HIV are relatively simple to carry out – usually a small sample of blood will be taken and then sent to a laboratory for analysis.

This can be done at a GP surgery or a sexual health clinic.

Those who are diagnosed as HIV positive will usually be prescribed a

combination of three antiretrovirals – medication which they will need to take daily – and encouraged to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.

In a short video developed by clinicians who were working on the project, Dr Muh-Yee Tung explains: "The blood test looks for markers in the blood of HIV-specific infection.

"We can do standard blood tests or we can do rapid point of care tests.

"We are trying to increase the frequency of HIV testing and make it more of a normal test as part of clinical care where it is indicated.

"People can present very early with HIV and have no signs and symptoms so the only way they would know is by getting a test.

"The commonest symptom is flu-like illness. People get fever, sore throat, potentially a rash.

"Those three, which obviously can mimic any other viral illness, sometimes trigger a thought – could this be HIV or could it just be flu?

"If it goes on for a longer period than usual – more than three to five days you would expect for a flu or cold, you might want to think about primary HIV.

"Or alternatively if the symptoms are so severe the patient really feels like they can't move, they can't walk, they can't eat, those severity conditions might make you think of primary HIV."

She added: "Knowing their status helps them access the right care at the right time or helps them stay negative from HIV, helps them promote safe sex practices or makes them aware of issues or areas where they could reduce their risk."

How buying Chartwell nearly drove Churchill to bankruptcy

Author and historian David Lough has delved into the financial affairs of one of the nation's most iconic leaders and unearthed a remarkable tale of financial mismanagement and reckless spending

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

SIR Winston Churchill is undoubtedly one of the most iconic figures in British history.

A BBC poll at the turn of the century in fact named the wartime leader as the greatest Briton of all time, and his name has long been synonymous with power, class and success.

However, a new book has revealed that behind the public image of Churchill drinking champagne and smoking cigars, was a reality of reckless spending and financial mismanagement.

With the help of unprecedented access to Churchill's private records, Kent-based author David Lough has created the first fully-researched narrative of the British bulldog's private finances and business affairs in his book titled *No More Champagne: Churchill and His Money*.

"I had to be very thorough in my research," the author explained to KoS. "I just told the story. I have not made any sort of judgement but it is an interesting part of the tapestry. It sheds some interesting light on a great figure."

After graduating with a history degree from Oxford, the author embarked on a career in the financial industry, founding his own private banking business, and says that his career background helped him on his journey to complete the book, and gave him something of an edge over fellow historians.

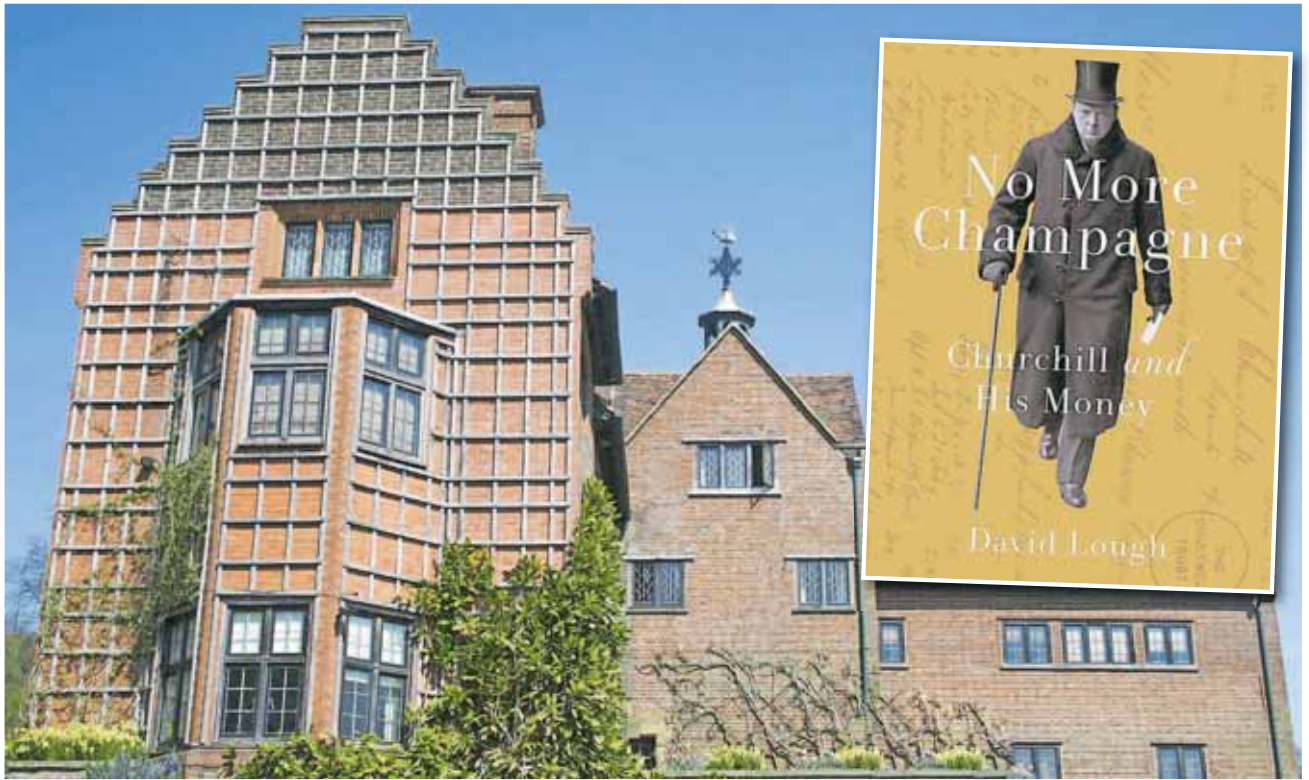
"It took a lot of time to piece it together and if I hadn't been part of the banking industry I would not have had the knowledge and expertise to understand the content and penetrate the key issues," he said.

Mr Lough, who has lived in Penshurst, near Tonbridge, for the last 30 years, says that one of the key components of Churchill's financial struggles, which culminated in him being unable to pay his bills while in office as prime minister, was the purchase of the famous Kent residence, Chartwell House.

"He bought his first country home during the First World War, but had to sell it because he could not afford to keep it.

"He then inherited a lot of money – what would be about £3 million today – when a cousin was killed in a train crash, and used that money to buy Chartwell House, against his wife, Clementine's wishes."

One of Kent's most popular tourist attractions, Chartwell – presented to the National Trust following Churchill's death in 1965 – is steeped in history; the site has been built upon since the 16th century, and Henry VIII was reputedly among its former occupants during his courtship of Anne Boleyn.



CHARTWELL: Winston Churchill's famous Kent residence, above, and David Lough's book *No More Champagne*, inset

The book describes it as a "manor large enough for a family of nine children and with a domestic staff of 13, its 70 acres of land looked after by an outdoor team of 20."

Mr Lough explains that Churchill ignored the advice of his wife, who preferred the idea of a smaller property, and decided to give it a go, spending a sizeable chunk of the inheritance on the acquisition of the house.

"Clementine always felt that because they had this inheritance they would be financially safe. This was the one time in her life she felt as if she had been misled, because Churchill didn't tell her he was going to buy the property."

"She wanted to buy a house by the seaside in Essex and was shocked when he bought the house without her knowing about it. She simply never felt at home. Even after his death, she was entitled to live there for the rest of her life but moved out immediately."

Matters at Chartwell only got worse when Churchill tried to repair and modernise the house.

"He budgeted to spend about £7,000 or £8,000, but in fact he spent £30,000, largely because he used an inexperienced architect. There were leaks and poor plastering throughout, and such costs were one of the major reasons he lost his inheritance," Mr Lough said.



AUTHOR: David Lough has lived in Penshurst for more than 30 years

Churchill was unhappy with the job as a whole, and as he got into debt during the 1930s, he tried to scabble the money back by attempting to sell the house on three occasions, all for significantly less money than he paid.

But The Great Depression meant the housing market was far from booming and it proved impossible to sell at any price.

As his financial problems deteriorated, Churchill frequently had to be bailed out – twice by his brother and once by a man called Sir Henry Strakosch, who paid £18,000 to take over his share holdings, allowing Churchill to take the house off the market and continue to live there.

This, along with the sale of filming rights to America after the war, was perhaps something of a pivotal moment, as Churchill then managed to

completely turn around his financial position, going from having debts of £20,000 to having money in the bank.

"Most people thought he emerged from the war poor, but he didn't," Mr Lough explained.

But his reckless spending continued, as Churchill used the funds to buy three farms, with the aim of creating a farming empire, but the venture lost him money.

So how did the author's fascination with the former prime minister begin?

"When he died in 1965, I was 14 so I was a young, impressionable soul," he said.

"My teacher was deliberately a bit edgy and controversial, and used to describe Churchill as 'a romantic old windbag'. I remember going home and repeating the words to my grandmother. Her jaw dropped and she was

frothing at the mouth.

"She started to buy me the official biography of Churchill which was released in volumes and after that I developed a real interest in him.

"The financial problems were well-documented in the early versions but I think the author of the biography changed and suddenly this kind of story disappeared. People generally seemed to be more interested in the politics than the financial side so there was a bit of a mystery about what had gone on.

"Then, 10 years ago, I read a lot of correspondence about him and his life. I thought I was as well equipped as anyone to take on the challenge."

The project was a lengthy one, spanning seven years in total, including five of research and two writing the actual book.

"I was doing other stuff as well but the process definitely took up most of my time. The whole thing was a bit like a marathon and I had to break through the pain barrier at times but I never had any intention of giving up.

"It was a bit like a jigsaw puzzle. The files were a bit all over the place and I had to keep my own records on my computer, but gradually the puzzle came together.

"The great thrill of research is when you have a hole in the story and then you find a piece that brings everything together. That makes all the hard work worthwhile."

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WRITER: Penny Legg will be visiting the county to help raise money for SSAFA.

Writer attending fundraising events to help charity cause

Molly Kersey speaks to writer Penny Legg about her upcoming visit to Kent...

A WRITER who has delved into the experiences of military personnel and their wives will be taking part in a series of events in Canterbury to help raise money for country's oldest armed forces charity.

Penny Legg will be travelling to the county to take part in a number of events held at Westgate Hall on November 7, 8 and 21, with SSAFA's Canterbury branch.

These include a Remembrance Day exhibition over the weekend of the 7 and 8 and a performance from the Kent Invicta Concert Band on the 21, where Mrs Legg will be meeting people to talk about and sign copies of her books – *Under The Queen's Colours* and *Military Wives: From The First World War to Afghanistan*.

As well as this, Mrs Legg will also

be attending a fundraising quiz night hosted by Robin Aaronicks, of the SSAFA's Canterbury branch.

Speaking about the inspiration for writing her books, she told KoS: "My husband is ex-Royal Navy and we go to a lot of military events where they all get together and sit talking about how things were. I thought – there is a book here."

"So I spoke to my publisher and said 'let's do this for the Queen's Jubilee and raise money for a few causes.'

"A lot of these men went through some really horrible things. They told me things they hadn't told anybody and it was such a privilege."

"Under The Queen's Colours came out in 2012 and I was asked if I could look at the other side of the coin and write about military wives. I interviewed about 40 or so ladies. The book is basically asking

– has life changed for a military wife since the First World War?"

And she drew on her own personal experience to write the book.

"My husband served in the Falklands, and I know what I went through in the 1980s as a military wife," she said.

"There is a lot you are expected to put up with. It is hard work at times, and you don't sign up for it. You marry the man and find yourself married to the service. You spend the whole time looking at the news, just hoping you won't hear your husband's name."

"Now the next of kin are notified before anything, so the Falklands was the turning point, it wasn't always like that. Military wives are acknowledged now, which is great."

"To me this is important. It's the tenth book I have written with this publisher, History Press, so

it's a bit of a milestone as well."

The books have been raising money for numerous causes, with some of the funds from *Under The Queen's Colours* going towards ABF The Soldier's Charity, RAFFB and the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity and donations to SSAFA being made from the sale of *Military Wives: From The First World War to Afghanistan*.

"I am absolutely delighted that SSAFA agreed to receive donations from the sale of the book and are supporting my efforts to sell it."

"It's a good community to be involved in and just do what you can. A lot of the serving personnel are still suffering from PTSD, which wasn't understood in times gone by. A lot of the Falklands veterans in particular are still suffering."

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Acclaimed ballet company will bring poignant shows to Kent

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

ACCLAIMED ballet company, The Russian State Ballet of Siberia, will be bringing a number of performances to the county.

They will perform productions including *The Snow Maiden*, *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Giselle* as they tour the UK from January to March next year, with dates in Bromley and Canterbury lined up.

Formed in 1981, The Russian State Ballet of Siberia has become established as one of Russia's leading ballet companies – comprising more than 40 dancers and 30 musicians.

They will be accompanied on the stage by the Orchestra of the Russian State Ballet.

Commenting on the tour, artistic director Sergei Bobrov said: "It is always a pleasure to bring the unique traditions of Russian Ballet to British audiences."

"Touring across the UK with a full company of dancers as well as highly-skilled musicians is always exciting; for me, it is very special to have the power of a symphony or-



BALLET: *The Snow Maiden* will be performed at the Churchill Theatre.

chestra bringing the choreography to life on stage.

"I am delighted to present my new staging of *The Snow Maiden* for the very first time."

Poignant ballet *Giselle*, which tells the story of love, treachery and forgiveness, will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on January 11, 2016, at 7.30pm, and *Sleeping Beauty* the following night at 7.30pm.

The Snow Maiden, which is based on a traditional folk tale set in the snow-covered landscape of rural Russia, will be shown on January 13, with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Later on in the year, the ballet company will be performing *Sleeping Beauty* at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, from February 29 to March 1 at 7.30pm.

The Snow Maiden will be per-

formed from March 2 to 3 at 7.30pm and *Giselle* will be shown the following night at the same time.

Finally, *Swan Lake*, will be performed on March 5 at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

For tickets to the Bromley performances you can visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.

For Canterbury tickets call the box office on 01227 787787.

Scarecrows to come to life

BASED on the book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, *The Scarecrows' Wedding* will be at the Theatre Royal Margate on October 18 at 2.30pm.

Call 01843 292795 to book.



TV semi-finalists perform

BRITAIN'S Got Talent semi-finalists Revelation Avenue will be performing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on September 26.

The singers were taken straight through to the final of the TV show after judge Amanda Holden pressed one of five golden buzzers.

To book, visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone

Orchestra begins season

THE Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra will perform at the Assembly Hall Theatre on October 4 at 3pm.

The orchestra features many talented local musicians.

To book, call 01892 530613.



Free concerts start again

LUNCHTIME concerts in the Colyer-Fergusson Hall in Canterbury will be starting next month.

The shows will start with solo recitalist Naomi Okuda Wooderson on recorder and Tom Foster on the harpsichord.

The concerts start at 1.10pm with free admission but a suggested donation of £3.

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TV stars due in Canterbury

GAME of Thrones actor Finn Jones will meet fans at new Canterbury bar Steinbeck & Shaw on Tuesday (September 22). Star of The Only Way is Essex, Lauren Pope, will perform as guest DJ on Friday.



Soul legends on the stage

MUSICAL show Soul Legends will be making its way to the Central Theatre, Chatham, on October 17.

The show features songs from legendary musicians including Aretha Franklin, James Brown and Tina Turner.

For tickets, call 01634 338338.

Strangers gig in county

THE Strangers will be playing a date at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, during their Black and White tour next year.

They will be performing on March 22, 2016. For tickets, visit www.atgtickets.com.



Oscar Wilde classic begins

OSCAR Wilde classic The Importance of Being Earnest will be starting its run at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, next week.

The show begins on Tuesday (September 22) and it will be ending on Saturday (September 26). For tickets, you can visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

An Inspector Calls at the Orchard Theatre

REVIEW: Luke May

luke.may@archant.co.uk

STEPHEN Daldry's production of An Inspector Calls started its UK tour at Dartford's Orchard Theatre.

Since its opening night in 1992, the production has received wide-spread praise, with this being its 25th tour.

The play bolsters an experienced and adept cast including Mad Men actor Tim Woodward as Mr Birling, as well as a mix of talent across theatre, film and television.

An Inspector Calls follows the interrogation of an upper-class family at their home by the mysterious Inspector Goole, played by Liam Brennan.

Director of both film and theatre, Daldry's interpretation of J B Priestley's An Inspector Calls is innovative and intimate, with a clever dolls house inspired setting, opening onto the staged streets below. The stage production immediately presents the play's central themes of class divide.

Opening on a closed off house, the audience is left with the voices



of those within the home, and the bewildered stares of children playing in the raining streets outside. The start of the play, like the rest, is intricately laden with all the social commentary Priestley originally put into the play, but with Daldry's updated presence of the stage itself, the stage truly comes to life.

As the story, and house, unfolds to the audience, we see the well-choreographed interrogation by the play's titular Inspector Goole toward the well-off Birling

family. Set in 1912, and written in 1945, Priestley's social commentary on community and responsibility was first performed in the Soviet Union in 1945, then in Britain in 1946.

Time spent on the frontline in the First World War, no doubt affected Priestley's decision to base this play two years before the outbreak of the Great War.

Avoiding spoilers, the play culminates in a warning of the dangers of living in a world with such a strong class divide.



INTERROGATION: Inspector Goole questions the family



CLASS: The play is laden with social commentary

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Builder, baker and breadstick maker's first book

The Great British Bake Off winner will be releasing his new book full of recipes, BIY: Bake It Yourself

RICHARD Burr might not have won last year's Great British Bake Off, but he's definitely one of the show's most memorable contestants.

Maybe it's the pencil behind the ear. Maybe it's the consistency that saw him scoop the most Star Baker accolades the programme's ever seen. Or maybe it's his delectable, down-to-earth demeanour, which never saw him flap, fluster or throw a Baked Alaska in the bin.

And while a new crew of bakers craft their showstoppers in this year's series, 39-year-old Burr has been beavering away releasing his first cookbook.

"I got to spend the whole winter

making all of my favourite food," he explains in the kitchen of his North London home.

The house, which was derelict when he bought it and lovingly restored with his own fair hands – he runs a building firm with his dad – has seen a fair bit of action of late. The entire book was shot, cover to cover, here, and includes lovely images of old tools from Burr's toolbox, including his beloved grandfather's saw.

It's clear that family's really important to him. He lives with his wife Sarah and has two adorable daughters, three-year-old Genevieve, all tousled blonde locks, and Elizabeth, six, who's at a summer camp today.

Baking has always filled a delicious hole in Burr's life.



BAKER: Richard Burr has enjoyed baking for many years

"Mum baked cakes and kept us alive, but I got a Saturday job in a bakery and scrumped as many doughnuts as I could.

"That's where my love of baking really comes from," he says, as he lays out the ingredients to make the mille-feuille recipe from his book, BIY: Bake It Yourself.

"And now I cook with the kids. I'm an early bird, so I'll often be kicking around with the girls in the morning, and if it's a choice between cooking in the kitchen or watching Nickelodeon, I'd rather have them in here with me."

After the success of Bake Off and landing a book deal, you'd be forgiven for thinking he might decide to knock the hard graft of building on the head. But building is a big part of Burr's life.

"The business went huge after Bake Off," he reveals. "I could have just used it to expand, but I wanted to have some fun with food, too. I try not to say 'no' to anything."

Indeed, he has a degree in biodiversity and conservation, which he took on while doing Bake Off and running a building firm, and he somehow managed to get a first.

And now, he's an author, too.

"My favourite recipes from the book include the blackberry and elderflower pavlovas. My wife is actually pathologically addicted to them."

"The millefeuilles are great, and there's a brilliant mincemeat muffin in there, that doesn't look much, but once you have it, you'll never eat mince pies again."

Church performances

FOLK duo Megson will be playing in a Barham church next month.

The husband and wife duo have previously been nominated in the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and they are double winners of the Spiral Earth Awards.

They will be performing at St John The Baptist Church, Barham, at 8pm on October 4. Tickets to the show are £12.50.

Call 01227 831493 to book.

Folk band take to stage

BAND The Furrow Collective will be launching their new EP and performing in Canterbury as part of their UK tour.

The folk band, consisting of Alasdair Roberts, Emily Portman, Lucy Farrell and Rachel Newton, will be at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, on November 29.

The show starts at 8pm and tickets are £13.

To book tickets you can visit www.marlowetheatre.com.

Katherine Ryan in Kent

COMEDIAN Katherine Ryan will be bringing her stand-up show, Kathburn, to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone.

She has appeared on The Jonathan Ross Show, QI and Live at the Apollo.

She will be taking to the stage on October 17 at 8pm.

Tickets to the show are £17.

For more information, or to book, you can visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk.

Musical trio to perform

MUSICAL trio Faustus will be performing in Sevenoaks next month.

The group will be taking to the stage at St Edith Hall, Kemsing, on October 2.

The performance will be starting at 7.30pm and tickets to the show are £12.

The band has released a new album, Broken Down Gentlemen.

For more details you can visit www.stedithfolk.co.uk.

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Millionaire playground of Marbella

TRAVEL REVIEW: Marbella

by Lisa Haynes

A SWARM of excitable tourists have formed around a super-yacht moored at Puerto Banus; some take pictures, others record YouTube clips and the rest point in disbelief. One of the multiple decks is kitted out with two giant flat-screen TVs and six on-board spectators are flanked by waiting staff serving gold jeroboams of champagne. Hundreds of spotlights illuminate the boat's ceiling like it's a modern art exhibit.

With Ferraris roaring past the glamorous marina every five minutes, it takes something extraordinarily luxurious to make people stop and stare here.

It's an intriguing lifestyle that's given rise to fly-on-the-wall TV show *Life On Marbs*, which follows a bunch of ex-pats living in this millionaire's playground. We're whisked away from Malaga airport in a chauffeur-driven car for our own taster of super-luxe sunshine. The suited driver – impressive in 30 degree heat – is blase about picking up stars like Lady Gaga, Paris Hilton and Enrique Iglesias for Marbella stopovers. "They perform and then they love to relax here," he says, noting that Gaga checks in to the Marbella Club Hotel.

Along with Hollywood stars, the 60-year-old hotel is famed for hosting European and Arab royalty. The palatial six-suite Villa del Mar private residence? Yours for an eye watering 15,000 euros a night.

Our own VIP experience begins at Ocean Club – a vision of Instagramable white leather beds and cornflower blue parasols. We're led to a circular VIP pool bed and are offered a bottle of Veuve Clicquot champagne. But the pinnacle of Ocean Club luxury is



GLAMOUR: VIP experiences are on offer in Marbella.

the 'Super VIP' bed that seats 12 with a waiter on tap to pour your three bottles of Dom Perignon.

Overlooking the beach, Ocean Club's restaurant is more 'fine dining in flip-flops' than 'cafe club sandwiches'. We take a break from the sunshine to gorge on a triple tiered silver tray of sushi and sashimi and graze on the royal seafood platter, piled high with Maine lobster, Alaskan king crab legs and North Sea shrimps.

Despite sitting in our beach sarongs, we're treated to five-star service. The in-house sommelier visits our table to recommend an ice-cold rose from the seven varieties on the lengthy wine list.

"Marbella is often misunderstood," Ocean Club's VIP manager Ana Lucia Alonso tells me, topping up my glass. "Yes, there is glitz and glamour, but it is also an authentic town with wonderful restaurants and beautiful

scenery. I especially love the Old Town and historic area, which is full of charm and character."

Taking Ana's advice, the following night we leave our heels behind and head to the more subdued – but no less vibrant – Marbella Old Town, a quick 6km cab ride from Puerto Banus.

We drive down a pristine, palm-tree lined road dubbed the Golden Mile. Home to some of the most opulent addresses in the Med, it links

TRAVEL FACTS

Lisa Haynes was a guest of Ocean Club. Visit www.oceanclub.es for more details. The black and gold annual closing party takes place on September 26 with tickets £145 per person.

Double rooms at the Gran Hotel Guadalpin Banus start from £110 per night, with breakfast. Visit www.granhotelguadalpin.com for more details about what is on offer.

Puerto Banus and Marbella town and is pure property voyeurism, with the opportunity to glimpse row-upon-row of millionaire mansions overlooking the beach. Currently a 10-bed villa sits on the market at 65,000,000 euros.

The Old Town leaves behind the uber-yachts and superclubs and instead, focuses on quaint courtyard dining and narrow cobblestone streets. Roaming around, we stumble upon Zozoi, positioned in a square of al fresco restaurants.

We're so distracted by the colourful mosaic tiling and decorative walls of Zozoi's pretty outdoor courtyard, it takes some time to select dishes from the seafood menu.

As with most European countries, dining out can easily extend past midnight, but surprisingly, so too does the shopping in Puerto Banus.

Alongside the busy bars on the front line of the port, I'm shocked to find glossy stores like Dolce & Gabbana, Missoni and Jimmy Choo open into the early hours, so tourists can get their designer fix around the clock.

While some buy gelatos, others splurge on It bags as a post-dinner treat.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



THE VISIT (15, 94 mins) Thriller

WRITER-DIRECTOR M Night Shyamalan embraces the current fad of found footage thrillers to recount an awkward reunion through the lens of a teenage girl, who is making a documentary about her dysfunctional family.

Rebecca and her younger brother Tyler prepare to spend a week in the country with the grandparents they have never met. This estrangement stems from an unspoken incident their mother refuses to discuss on camera.

While the mother spends quality time with her new boyfriend, the children meet their Nana and Pop-Pop. Initially, they are charmed by the old-fashioned ways of the grandparents, who allow Rebecca and Tyler the run of the homestead, except for one area which is out of bounds.

The old folks retire to bed and the children are asked to remain in their room. Late one night, Rebecca and Tyler hear strange sounds and they venture into the darkness to investigate...

IRRATIONAL MAN (12A, 95 mins) Drama/Romance

ANGUISHED philosophy professor Abe Lucas, played by Joaquin Phoenix, arrives at the New England college campus of Braylin in the midst of an existential crisis. At this low ebb, Abe casually welcomes the amorous overtures of fellow professor Rita Richards, whose marriage to her husband Paul has stagnated. He also intoxicates perky student Jill Pollard. Sitting in a diner one afternoon, Abe and Jill overhear a tearful conversation about an unfeeling judge, who is needlessly wrenching apart happy families. Abe resolves to reinvigorate his humdrum existence by taking the life of Judge Spangler. Committing the perfect murder should be simple for a celebrated man of learning; eluding the long arm of the law might be somewhat trickier.

PASOLINI (18, 84 mins) Biopic



WILLEM Defoe delivers an eye-catching performance as celebrated Italian film-maker Pier Paolo Pasolini in this unflinching biopic directed by Abel Ferrara. The film unfolds during the final days of Pasolini's life, imagining what might have happened in the hours leading up to the filmmaker's death: he was discovered on a beach in 1975, crushed by his own

car. Through Ferrara's lens, Pasolini struggles to make sense of his unfinished film *Petrolio*, while playing the dutiful son for his mother and cruising the streets of Rome in his Alfa Romeo GT Veloce to pick up rent boys. It's one of these paramours who leads Pasolini to his horrific demise - an inglorious end for one of European cinema's true visionaries.

Headlining the Malvern Autumn Show is The UK National Giant Vegetables Championship, which separates the men from the boys in the oversized veg world.

Producing a prize specimen takes a huge amount of work and a lot of mollycoddling. You need to beef up your soil with organic matter, fine-tune individual techniques and spend three months preparing your land for giant things to come and the other nine coaxing seeds into big guns.

Seed catalogues and specialists offer giants like Old Colossus Heirloom Tomatoes, Oxheart carrots, Kelsae sweet giant onion and Carolina Cross watermelons. Northern Giant Cabbage (weighing up to 100lbs), the Japanese Imperial Long Carrot (more than 12in long) and the Mammoth Zeppelin cucumber, weighing in at



GIANT: Producing a prize specimen will take a huge amount of work.

Size matters with giant veg

Many growers save the seeds from their largest fruits to plant next year.

Seed companies such as Medwyn Williams and W Robinson and Son specialise in giant veg and provide growing information on their websites. Starting vegetables off early in artificial heat to give them a long growing season and harvesting late

are two of the main necessities for success. Vegetables such as pumpkins are easier to grow because they aren't started off until April, but leeks and onions need to be started off under glass in November and will need tending all through the winter.

Trusses of runner beans and tomatoes need to be thinned to a point where you might just have one speci-

men left on the plant and all the energy goes into that one fruit. Tomatoes are heavier when they are green.

Add slow-release organic fertiliser at planting time to ensure the nutrients are there when they are needed, as giant veg tend to grow in quick spurts. Use the appropriate feed, so if you are growing the plant for the fruit you'll need plant food high in potas-

sium and phosphorous, but if you are growing leafy veg like cabbage you'll need a fertiliser with plenty of nitrogen. Anyone growing giant veg will know that sporadic watering could spell disaster. Water your veg thoroughly on a regular basis or the fruits may split, so it's probably wise to sort out drip irrigation if you are serious about winning that competition.

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We don't have room for more

IN RESPONSE to Yvonne Christie (KoS letters, last week), we as a nation do probably more than any other country in helping the Syrian migrants and spend £1 billion – second only to America.

And as for opening our doors for them is not looking at the big picture. Firstly, from the look of them, most are not asylum seekers but economic migrants and a large number are young strong men, who should be helping to fight for their country as our forbearers did.

On top of the migrants from Syria, there are tens of thousands from the African states that are trying to enter Europe of which many European countries have closed their borders

Due to the numbers, it's been stated that if our population continues to grow at the rate it has, by 2060 we will have grown to such an extent that it would be the equivalent to the population of Holland.

Why don't the migrants go to the Middle East countries where their culture is similar to there own and the religion is the same, plus they are the rich countries as far as wealth goes.

We are not a rich country. Although we may have a higher GDP than many countries but we also have a debt of £1.5 trillion and growing every month.

This country rarely lives within its means.

If we are struggling to cope now what will happen in the future regarding the next few generations?

Dave Preston,
via email

Refugees taking unnecessary risk

I WOULD like to take issue with your letter writer Jackie Orpin where she suggests that the UK is not doing its bit for refugees. This is completely untrue.

Over the last 10 years, the UK has taken more refugees than any other EU country – it is second only to the USA in funding the UN refugee camps.

Countries like Germany and those who encourage an open door policy have blood on their hands as more will die.

As for the little boy, his mother and brother who drowned - they were not trying to reach safety as they had lived in a house in Turkey for three years.

I am not a parent but I would not put a family on an inadequate boat

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Nothing wrong with using Calais hospital

IN THE private health sector, health tourism is quite common ('Anger over deal to ship patients to new Calais hospital, KoS, last week).

So why shouldn't NHS patients in east Kent be given the option of treatment in Calais?

Sending people to France for operations will show up how far standards in the NHS have fallen.

For many years, we have been fed propaganda about the wonders of the NHS. The reality is that our health services are woeful.

Comparison of our barrack-like wards with the routine provision of single hospital rooms in France is just the most obvious example of this.

Medical staff in France are more likely to speak good English than many of those imported to work in England.

Short-sighted NHS administrators employ immigrant staff,

sometimes of dubious quality, instead of training medical students in this country.

Politicians justify refusals to build hospitals in Kent by claiming that we are better off than other UK regions.

For much of east Kent this is far from the case.

The Conservative MP for Shepway and Hythe [Damian Collins] says in the longer term we need more community hospitals.

That may be, but it will do nothing to address the lack of doctors.

The deficiencies of our health care will not be, and cannot be, addressed until a major new teaching hospital, educating in excess of a hundred medical students a year, is built in Kent, probably in Canterbury or Chatham.

Frederic Stansfield
Ramsgate

Our borders are far too exposed

IF BRITAIN imposes severe restrictions on legal immigration, whether from the EU or elsewhere, greatly increased illegal immigration will simply take its place.

The effects of that are horrendous; tax receipts will decrease, the black/grey economy will explode, as will crime of all kinds. The costs of policing and prevention will soar.

It could eventually bring in ID cards, and hasten authoritarian or

police state 'creep', thereby changing our way of life. The entire British Isles have miles of mainly unprotected coastline, which can easily be crossed via boat or air – 19,500 miles according to the British Cartographic Society.

We naively think that military and civil radars and 'on ground monitoring' don't allow that to happen, but that is an entirely false notion. There is only enough Border Force, police or private security manpower to cover main air, sea and rail ports. And certainly insufficient to spare for more than a very small number of inspections and searches.

In short, the emperor has (virtually) no clothes. But that won't ever be admitted, for obvious reasons.

John Dutton,
Tunbridge Wells

Real debate is racing away

STEVE Horton, head of KCC's road safety team (KOS 06.09) wrote a fairly accurate dissemination, for a change, of why road accidents happen, sadly I do not hold up much hope in any real change in real world practice on their part.

All we ever see is reducing speed limits as the panacea for all road accidents, the Sheppey Crossing being a recent good example, where nearly two miles of dual carriageway has been downgraded to 50mph.

With accidents rising, editor Chris Britcher's editorial just re-enforces this entrenched view, that has halted proper road safety discussion.

While an accident impact speed of course does make a difference, we should not be arguing what is the best speed to hit something, rather than educating people to not have the accident in the first place.

How many people were driving on the A249 (Sheppey Bridge) at 50mph before the new downgraded speed limit was imposed? Now we all have to be collectively punished for somebody else's mistake?

The biggest problem is that government want us 'out of our cars' so they are not going to do anything that might be seen to promote driving, hence everything concerned with driving must be written or shown in a negative way, despite this constant drip feed of negativity, but any positive educational road safety is shunned in favour of a more 'big-stick' approach.

Terry Hudson
Whitstable

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Margate Shell Grotto

by **H Jones from Sittingbourne**

To see your photograph printed, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk, or post it to **Archant KOS Media, Images of Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP**. Be sure to include your name, address and a contact telephone number. Unfortunately we cannot return any prints, and please do not send negatives. Note: all digital images must be no less than 200dpi. Please note, our relationship with MyFerryLink has now come to an end. We thank them for their long support.

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Customer Deposit	£187	Optional Final Payment	£4,090.50
Manufacturer's Deposit	£1,000	Duration of Agreement	37 months
Total Deposit	£1,187	Interest Rate (Fixed)	3.04%
Amount of Credit	£9,608	APR Representative	5.9%

Based on an estimated annual mileage of 6,000 miles per annum. Excess mileage charged at 14.9 pence per mile.



i30 1.4 S From £12,750

36 monthly payments of	£248.36	Interest Charges	£1,482.21
On the Road Price	£12,750	Total Amount Payable	£14,232.21
Customer Deposit	£248	Optional Final Payment	£4,543.25
Manufacturer's Deposit	£500	Duration of Agreement	37 months
Total Deposit	£748	Interest Rate (Fixed)	3.04%
Amount of Credit	£12,002	APR Representative	5.9%

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Cash Price	£18,695	Interest Charges	£2,398
Customer Deposit	£4,500	1 Final Payment of	£6,512.25
Manufacturer's Deposit	£500	Total Amount Payable	£21,093.53
48 Monthly Payments of	£199.61	Interest Rate (Fixed)	3.04%
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View the Hyundai range 24/7 at **www.kenthyundai.co.uk**



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Fuel consumption MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai range: Urban 25.2 (11.2) - 70.6 (4.0), Extra Urban 38.7 (7.3) - 83.1 (3.4), Combined 32.1 (8.8) - 76.3 (3.7), CO2 Emissions 231 - 96 g/km.
Fuel consumption: figures shown are based on official EU test figures. These are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results. Terms and conditions apply. Vehicles shown for illustration purposes only.
Finance subject to status. Over 18's only. Written quotations available on request. A guarantee may be required.

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

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motoring reviews in...

KENT LIFE

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SUPERB: Skoda's big car offers room, style and economy... and a handy bespoke brolly

Top Skoda is even more Superb

PREVIEW: Skoda still labours under those tired old jokes, but its top car justifies a valued name from the brand's heritage...

BADGE snobs may think a Skoda called the Superb is the biggest Skoda joke of all.

But the rejuvenated Czech brand will, as usual, have the last laugh because the Superb name was coined in 1933 for a car so good that, within three years, it catapulted Skoda from No3 to the top of the car market in what was then Czechoslovakia; a country already noted for its engineering prowess and soon 'acquired' by Nazi Germany.

But the name was shelved during the dark days of the company's post-war Soviet era, which spawned all those old jokes about Skoda quality, and not revived until 2001 when the modern era under Volkswagen was well under way.

And this month welcomes a third modern generation Superb (from £18,640) with styling crisper than before, ready to take on established premium rivals for typically modest Skoda prices.

As ever it is well-specc'd too with some nice touches such as neatly bespoke umbrellas ready for that rush from car to doorway, and a handy ice scraper concealed within the fuel filler cap.

OK, last time's clever half boot/half hatch cargo opening has been ditched in search of weight saving – it's all the rage in the industry now – but the result is a nicely executed rear hatchback that still looks like a classy saloon too, and there is also a smart estate model.



Though it is a big car – think Audi A6 or BMW 5 Series – the new Superb is also frugal with Skoda claiming up to 70mpg (combined cycle), though the forthcoming ultra-eco Greenline model should top that by some 6mpg.

There are also signs that Skoda is learning on the cabin front: it's clear that more attention has been paid to going beyond durability and convenience, to make the Superb interior more welcoming this time around.

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Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA Superb range: Urban 31.4 (9.0) to 62.8 (4.5), Extra Urban 45.6 (6.2) to 76.4 (3.7), Combined 39.2 (7.2) to 70.6 (4.0). CO2 emissions for the ŠKODA Superb range: 164 to 105g/km. Please note this information is preliminary. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Vauxhall's sports Astra looks sharp

Vauxhall broke the three-door hatchback mould, so the current Astra GTC looks as sporty as it does practical, writes **Steve Loader...**

THREE-DOOR versions of family hatches used to be the poor relations of the range, unless they were a GT variant with power and 'go faster' accoutrements.

Vauxhall changed all that with the Astra Sport Hatch in 2005, a deliberate styling shift from the five-door Astra launched a year earlier.

The genie was out of the bottle: rivals rushed to emulate Vauxhall's example as they saw how the sporty three-door variant attracted new business for an affordable coupe-hatch, and added lustre to the overall Astra line-up.

Vauxhall topped that in 2011 with a stunning three-door version of the next generation Astra, this time labelled the GTC – GT Coupe perhaps? Who cares, it sounded and looked the part.

If the five-door Astra hatch was sleek, its half-sister was racy, whether it had the power or not.

The GTC sits wide and low on the road and the increasingly impressive Vauxhall/Opel design team blurred the relationship between the two Astras even more: though clearly related, the GTC wore the now familiar Vauxhall 'blade' motif next



to the front wheel while it was next to the rear for its alter-ego.

And a 'swoop' looped around the GTC's door handles enhanced the impression it was speeding, even when standing still.

But while a cleverly pinched window line towards the rear suggested a coupe shape, roof height

was kept sensible, enabling adult access to the back and a decent boot area.

The car's driving characteristics didn't disappoint either: Vauxhall had noted the improving chassis set-ups of the Astra's arch-rivals, the VW Golf and Ford Focus, and created a new layout to please the driver,



with a flat cornering stance and lots of grip.

The car's impressive steering matches effort to speed accurately, without losing the feedback essential when tackling difficult roads and surfaces.

There's a new five-door Astra out soon, so the current GTC probably

Vauxhall Astra GTC Ltd Edition 1.6 CDTi

Price:	from £26,090
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	VW Scirocco

has less than two years before it too is replaced, but it is wearing well, especially with some of Vauxhall's new powertrains, such as the excellent 1.6-litre 'whisper diesel' fitted to our test car, offering 0-60mph in 9.5 seconds and 65.7mpg (official combined).

The label is well earned: this engine delivers low down urge but lots of refinement when pushed hard or cruising, so the GTC is a coupe hatch that doesn't ask you to make compromises if you cover many business miles.

Fit and finish is excellent with good quality materials, a well-organised and bright dashboard and lots of room for those in front. OK, access to the back and space is a bit limited, but you'd expect that in a coupe, and headroom and legroom is still respectable once you are seated – it's an all-rounder with great style.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 94.2 (3.0), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 88.3 (3.2). CO₂ emissions: 373 - 85g/km.*

*Participating Retailers only. £500 Free Fuel offer not available on VIVA, Corsa Sting and Corsa Sting R. £500 Free Fuel will be supplied via pre-pay debit card. Purchase only, cannot be used to withdraw cash. Refer to www.vauxhall.co.uk/freefuel or contact your local Retailer for details. Offer applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 units (purchase only). All other customers are excluded. Offer available on eligible new vehicle orders from 18 to 21 September which are registered by 30 September 2015. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Correct at time of going to press.

Main Dealer SERVICING

YOUR GUIDE TO

Buy a car - then look after it

CAR buyers spend much time on car choice, only to then neglect it. But it's vital that the vehicle is serviced and repaired promptly and competently.

The traditional guarantee used to be a full main dealer service history (FMDSH) a reassuring record that everything required for the manufacturer's warranty had been carried out.

But 2002 EU legislation decreed this was a restrictive practice, and made it illegal for manufacturers to insist that only franchised networks could maintain the warranty.

Manufacturers also had to make vehicle diagnostics – crucial with increasingly sophisticated vehicles – specialist tools and updates available to independent garages and servicing centres.



TAKE CARE: Hyundai's all-new Tucson SUV should be worth more later on, if serviced by a main dealer



Nevertheless, market sentiment still places a premium on a FMDSH; used car buyers will usually pay more for a car with this 'ticket' – especially on premium models.

One could argue that this perceived premium is wiped out by higher main dealer service costs, but this over-simplifies the picture:

with car sales and profits squeezed during the recession, dealers became more competitive on servicing, customer service and ancillaries like tyres, exhausts and air con top-ups – normally the preserve of quick-fit centres.

They also bank on the perception that only a main dealer's technicians can know their brand's cars

as well they do, while 'all makes' centres must spread expertise across many makes and models.

And dealers know that happy service customers keep coming back, each time seeing newer models just a few feet from the service desk – the temptation to buy again from their friendly dealer becomes harder.

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Main dealers up the pace V quick fit

SPECIALIST 'quick/fast-fit' centres boomed as drivers tried to save money on exhausts, tyres, batteries, clutches, shock absorbers and routine services, plus the annual MOT.

But main dealers were not idle, reckoning that if car owners were still using their service bays, they might consider realistic deals on consumables like tyres and exhausts, for instance, to ensure a time-saving one-stop shop purchase.

Main dealers also guarantee only genuine manufacturers' parts are used, bringing the confidence of additional quality and reliability and the knowledge that this will be logged on the dealer/manufacture database.

And that same guarantee, plus realistic pricing, has encouraged owners to have bodyshop repairs done by the franchise too.

Main dealers have also borrowed from quick-fit rivals, by offering menu pricing; a customer can choose what he wants and knows in advance what it will cost – avoiding motoring indigestion, when the bill is presented.

Some dealers will even let you spread the cost via finance or servicing schemes covering several years.

Others may also offer a loyalty scheme with a tariff of cheaper prices to keep owners of older and lower value models on their books, rather than see them defect to the non-franchised sector, simply because they feel their car is no longer worth paying top prices for servicing prices.

Another trick borrowed from the quick-fit sector is longer working hours at main dealer service centres; dealers know many customers want to drop off their car early on their way to work and then pick it up at the end of the day – a courtesy car may even be offered.

Bookings can often be made centrally too, so that customers living midway between two franchised dealers within the same group can pick the most convenient service slots available.



SHOULD YOU QUICK FIT?: if your car – like this Hyundai i20 supermini or latest Skoda Superb family saloon – suddenly needs a new tyre, you might find your main dealer can beat a fast-fit centre

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Women Seeking

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PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc. Whistable area, seeks similar, slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 4292 Box 418117

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. P's call, ACA Tel No: 0906 515 4299 Box 418167

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0906 515 4295 Box 366019

ESSEX lady, mid 60s, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4275 Box: 405297

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

LAUREN, 32yrs, recently divorced, own home and 2 kids seeks single dads or older chap. Text only to Mailbox No: 4127590

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FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 481973

KAREN, 51yrs, never been married and does not want to be! Just wants a nice kind hearted chap for dates, texts etc. Text only to Mailbox No: 4032409

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4170874

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

TERESA, 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081

JAN, 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50s, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTW professional, caring, fun, 50-60s for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

JAN, 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ALISON, 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517

ALISON, 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497

DEBORAH, 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

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SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171

JACKIE, 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297

BECKY, 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233

LINDA, 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195

LUCY stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks like-minded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man to get to know. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, WLTW honest, fun male for possible tr. looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549

SUE, 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTW kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735

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ANDREW, 63, likes animals, walking, boat fares, shopping, looking for someone similar living in the Maidstone/Kent area, for possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419203

ALAN, 49yrs, kind chap with own building business, been broken hearted and seeks kind caring lady, looks unimportant. Text only to Mailbox No: 4105813

MALE 56, likes good conversation, seeks older lady for discreet friendly fun, 50 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419201

MALE 51, 5ft 8ins, N/S, GSOH, easygoing, seeks slim female, 18-45 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338269

RICHARD 59 from East Kent. WLTW genuine female 50 plus for friendship! Text only to Mailbox No: 4448765

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244

MIKE from Canterbury 57, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim female, 21-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379673

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789

BLONDE female, 47, looking for fun, sensual, experienced, understanding, seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415675

INTELLIGENT funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right places, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477

JENNY voluptuous blonde tanned well-presented female, enjoys being and giving pampering, cooking, cosy nights, looking for some broadminded excitement. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415399

EMMA slim 5ft 8ins, single employed female with OHAC, enjoys many interests, gym, music, easy-going, genuine, supportive, seeking similar male for a chat, maybe a date. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414957

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BARRY 49, 6ft, well built, kind, affectionate, loving, seeks special lady for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 393855

MALE 70s, fit, looking for lady to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

69YR old male, professional, 5ft 10ins, fit, medium build, young outlook, reliable, sincere, likes most things, seeks slim, slender, uncomplicated lady. Kent/Surrey. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418531

RICHARD 63, N/S, clean-shaven, likes meals out, days out, classic cars, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461

JONATHAN good looking, considerate, long curly hair, N/S, seeks tall, slim female, 30-45. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418451

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out, cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

YOUNG 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845

55YR old male, 5ft 9ins, slim, likes swimming, pool, seeking female for fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418265

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175

COMPANION sought, 50-60s by slim, young looking 65yr old man for cinema, music, eating, drinking, talking and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418257

JOHN nice looking, brown curly hair, gentle, understanding, seeks tall, slim lady for daytime no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207

BRIAN happy go lucky, genuine, loving, likes nights in, DVDs, meals out, seeking genuine lady for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418197

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

MALE 71, Tidy, OHAC WLTW Lady late 60s early 70s for easy friendship. Likes animals. Text only to Mailbox No: 475205

YOUNG 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909

COME dine with me. Attractive black British male 50 yrs, 6ft, medium building, working, GSOH, romantic and genuine WLTW similar female. Text only to Mailbox No: 4763687

PETE 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077

MALE widower, N/S, seeks buxom lady, 50-70, likes reading, 60's music, pub quizzes and crossovers. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417905

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195



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Gay Seeking

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BI male 57 slim GSOH seeks local guy for fun and friendship. Text only to Mailbox No: 4751943

JESSICA, 53 yrs old, feminine, sexy, smooth body seeking gay or bi man for fun, must be non-smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418713

FEMININE, sexy, cross-dresser, non-smoker, seeking cross-dresser gay or bi guy for fun. Must be non-smoker. Text only to Mailbox No: 4866072

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This opportunity will see you selling print and digital advertising campaigns and solutions to local businesses. As well as managing existing customers and seeing that they continuously gain return on their investment, you will also work with new clients, inspiring them with genuine cost-effective ideas and solutions tailor-made for their business.

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Bradstow is a creative and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19. It is situated in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children and young people with autism and severe learning difficulties with associated behaviours that may be challenging. We have achieved national recognition for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

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Working as part of the childcare team, this role involves providing care and support to students mornings, evenings and weekends being a student's Keyworker and some management responsibility.
£22,442 - £25,416 pa - 41 hours per week. All year round

**LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS
(TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS – EDUCATION)**

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, for which previous experience is required:

£13,047 - £13,838 pa - 37½ hours per week, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

(INDIVIDUAL LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS)

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, no previous experience is required, full training will be provided:

£12,075 - £12,420 pa - 37½ hours per week, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

*For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.

ICT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

Working under the supervision of the Data Manager, this role provides a wide range of ICT support throughout the school.

£17,714 - £19,742 pa - 37 hours per week. All year round

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (PERSONNEL)

Assisting the Personnel Officer, and Personnel Assistant, this role provides Personnel based administrative support to the school.

£16,231 - £17,372 pa - 37 hours per week. All year round

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, warm, creative and open to learning with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk. Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is midnight Thursday 1st October 2015.

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The MV Prinses Christina

Dutch Bulbfields & Amsterdam River Cruise

By Rail or Air - Amsterdam, Hoorn, Volendam, Amsterdam - 25 April, 2016

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£599pp** • Quote: BD4-KOS

Join us on this exclusive Dutch Bulbfields River Cruise on board the stylish MV Prinses Christina. A visit to Holland in springtime is a mesmerising feast for the senses as the gardens and fields are full of bursting tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, complemented with spring flowering shrubs and plants. The highlight of this cruise is an included visit to Keukenhof Gardens with its magnificent floral displays and there is time to explore the canals, museums and flowers markets of Amsterdam too. We also visit Volendam, on the Zuiderzee, and Hoorn.

We travel by train from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Amsterdam or alternatively fly from Gatwick to Amsterdam. Our exclusive river cruiser, will host you in comfort and style with all meals plus selected free drinks with lunch, dinner and at the bar from 6pm to midnight.



Keukenhof Gardens

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • GN Host and Cruise Director on board
• Return rail travel St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Amsterdam OR return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 4-nights full board cruise on the MV Prinses Christina sharing a twin bed outside cabin on Cabin Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Visit to Keukenhof Gardens • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Fun & Friendly Cruising



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Secret Citadelle to Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Dinant, Aachen, Valkenburg & Brussels - 24 Nov, 2015

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£529pp** • Quote: TC11-1-KOS

Join us for a relaxing river cruise starting in the picturesque town of Dinant, located on the Meuse River and home to an impressive citadel. Sailing past scenic landscapes onto Namur, with its beautiful 17th and 18th-century architecture. We visit two exceptional Christmas Markets: Aachen in Germany, with a visit to the Lindt Chocolate Factory Outlet and Valkenburg in Holland, with its unique Christmas Caves. We also visit Brussels, the Belgian capital with its famous Christmas market and Grand Place.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout
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• 4-night full board cruise on the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine, & soft drinks served at lunch & dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Three Countries Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Valkenburg, Liege, Monschau & Brussels - 28 Nov, 2015

4 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£429pp** • Quote: TC11-2-KOS

Join us for a fun-packed cruise sailing between the historic city of Maastricht in Holland, and Liege in Belgium. Included excursions take in Germany's delightful Monschau, a picturesque town nestled in the hills, offering visitors a wealth of things to see and do, quaint shops, romantic old streets and a small yet beautiful Christmas market. We also visit the Dutch 'Christmas town' of Valkenburg with its unique Christmas market caves, and Brussels, the Belgian capital.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 3-night full board cruise on the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

Germany & Belgium Christmas Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Aachen, Bruges & Brussels - 1 Dec, 2015

4 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£429pp** • Quote: TC12-1-KOS

Join us for a fun-packed river cruise visiting three wonderful Christmas markets including Aachen in Germany which is transformed into a paradise of lights and colours with its festive market located around the cathedral and town square, and home to the Lindt chocolate factory outlet; beautiful Bruges with its wonderful festive atmosphere and historic charm, and Brussels with its festive market and majestic Grand Place.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply
• 3-night full board cruise on board the MPS Princess sharing a twin outside rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad



Free Drinks
Private Charter

New Year Party & Festive Markets River Cruise

by Rail or Air - Maastricht, Liege, Nijmegen & Rotterdam - 29 Dec, 2015

5 days semi-all-inclusive, from **£699pp** • Quote: NY12-KOS

Celebrate the New Year in style on board the MS Johannes Brahms, sailing from Liege in Belgium to Holland including stops at Maastricht, home to Andre Rieu, Nijmegen, and Rotterdam where we count down to 2016 with a New Year party on board and a spectacular fireworks display over the city's Erasmus Bridge. We visit the festive markets in Liege, Maastricht and Nijmegen, explore Dordrecht and enjoy a candlelit New Year's day cruise in Rotterdam.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad
• Return rail travel from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports to Amsterdam - supp't may apply • 4 nights full board cruise sharing a twin bed MR2 rear cabin on main deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from lunchtime to midnight at the bar • Entertainment • Transfers abroad

Chief Clifford coy on Adams' future

Kent CEO gives KoS the lowdown after a 'disappointing' year

Cricket

By Tom Pyman

KENT cricket CEO Jamie Clifford has refused to confirm that head coach Jimmy Adams will extend his stay beyond his current contract.

After a disappointing County Championship season, which saw Kent deliver just four wins, the pressure is mounting on Adams.

Clifford told KoS that an inquest into the team's performance was imminent: "It's been an interesting year. When you get to this stage there are a huge range of emotions and relief is the big one because the County Championship campaign was very disappointing."

"The season has only just finished and I think we need to go through the review process and see where we are then. Jimmy has still got another year on his deal and whether he stays beyond that is not something we have started to discuss."

Clifford didn't rule out the possibility of bringing in international players over the winter, but expressed pride at the implementation of a 'home grown' policy that has seen the emergence of players like Daniel Bell-Drummond, who was called up for England Lions duty this week.

"We are excited about producing our own players, and I think the Kent cricket-supporting public like that players are drawn from within the county," he said.

"It doesn't have to be that way but academies are there for a reason, and the progress of our young players, not only for the county but England as



PRESSURE: Jimmy Adams' performance is under review after a disappointing County Championship campaign

Pictures: ADY KERRY

well, is encouraging.

"If you take the whole season and think about what it has delivered, there are still a lot of positives. The T20 campaign was heartening and losing two quarter-finals was hard to take. If we put our best performances in there, it could have been a different story."

"Ultimately in the County Champi-

onship we just didn't play well enough, and that is regrettable, but the last couple of matches were encouraging, and we want to see that on a consistent basis next year so we can go up to Division One."

Kent's final County Championship game against Gloucestershire was a damp squib as just 15 overs were bowled in four days at Canterbury.

Olympic champ Yarnold to take season break

Olympics

SEVENOAKS' Olympic champion Lizzy Yarnold is taking a season-long break from competition.

Yarnold, 26, who won gold for Great Britain in Sochi in 2014, will still be training in the UK throughout the season, but will not be involved in the eight World Cup races and annual World Championships in 2015/16.

She will return to skeleton in the hope of becoming the first slider and the first British Winter Olympian to defend her title in PyeongChang in 2018.

Yarnold said: "I'm really pleased my coaching team and I have decided that I should remain in the UK this season."



CHAMPION: Lizzy Yarnold shows off her gold medal from Sochi 2014

"Coming off the back of my win in Sochi it was hard to re-motivate myself, but I had the Grand Slam in my

sights and wanted so desperately to be world champion that it saw me through.

"It wasn't until I returned home that I realised I was emotionally fatigued – more than the usual end-of-season exhaustion – so I asked my team if we could approach this year differently."

"It will be hard to watch others compete without me, but I really feel like this is the right time for me to refresh, take stock and come back even more motivated for the future."

"I have a training programme set for me over the winter so I will still be working hard even though I won't be on the circuit. I won't be putting my feet up and relaxing, unfortunately."

Yarnold created history this year by completing the Grand Slam of skeleton titles in a mere 407 days.

Sport Shorts » Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

Premier golf course to host 'Ryder Cup for servicemen'

KENT'S premier golf course, Royal St Georges, is set to host a Ryder Cup-style competition between injured servicemen and veterans from Great Britain and America.

The Simpson Cup, a competition inaugurated by Kent golfer John Simpson to raise funds and awareness for the On Course Foundation, will take place from September 20-23.

The foundation helps men and women who were injured, sick or wounded in the line of duty to rebuild their lives by giving them the opportunity to play the game and gain employment in the golf industry.

An opening ceremony at 5pm on Sunday will launch the competition before the player/sponsors' competition takes place the following day.

The tournament then begins in earnest on Tuesday, with six four-ball matches followed by 12 singles matches on the Wednesday.

The whole event is open to the public and is free of charge.



TEE-OFF: Michael Browne at the 2014 Simpson Cup



DACK: The Gillingham midfielder has been in fine goalscoring form

Edinburgh takes pride in 'overachieving' Gills

GILLINGHAM manager Justin Edinburgh admits his side are overachieving but says that everyone at the club is enjoying their strong start to the season.

Edinburgh said: "We have been overachieving and going above and beyond what we expected as a group."

"The standards have been set and the players have produced performances and results, and it's now about trying to maintain that level day-in, day-out, not just in matches but in training as well."

After reaching the summit of the League One table at the start of the month, the Gills boss echoed his praise of the spirit and togetherness within the squad.

"There's a real buzz in the dressing room and a will for the next game to come around," he said.

"We don't avoid looking at the table but we never get carried away. We will certainly enjoy it because we know there will be some indifferent days. But we can enjoy it now and take pride in where we are."

Gymnastic duo gunning for gold

TWO Tunbridge Wells schoolboys head to Germany this week with their sights set on gold at the European Championships in Acrobatic Gymnastics.

Sam Large, 14, and Hector Kinghorn, 11, are representing Great Britain in the men's pairs in the 11-16 years age group of the competition in Riesa.

The reigning British champions, who have been competing together for two years, have already tasted success this year having won gold medals at the MAIA cup in Portugal and the FIAC event in Belgium.

The European Championships take place over three days, with qualifying on Friday and Saturday and the finals on Sunday.

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